

JAN 15-16, 1996
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UNRWA to move to Middle East in June

VIENNA (AFP) — The U.N. agency for aiding Palestinian refugees will move from its Vienna headquarters to Gaza and Amman on June 15, a spokesman said Friday. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which employs more than one hundred people in Vienna, will base its social services, education and health departments out of Amman. The headquarters and the financial, legal and public relations departments will be based in Gaza, said spokesman Sandro Tucci. The date was decided on by Peter Hansen, the new Danish U.N. commissioner in charge of Palestinian refugees, who took over the post from former Turkish Foreign Minister Ihter Turkmen on Jan. 20. The agency was created in 1949 and moved into its current Vienna headquarters in 1978. Its mandate runs through 1999. Mr. Hansen has said that within a few years he hopes the Palestinian Authority created under peace accords with Israel would be able to take over the organisation's activities. Mr. Hansen, who has visited to Syria and Lebanon, has already met Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

Jordan Times

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King cites success of talks with Mubarak, need for joint work to restore Arab coordination

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein paid a short visit to Egypt on Thursday which resulted in, inter alia, an agreement to hold a summit meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Amman soon. The meeting, whose date has not been fixed yet, would discuss backing for the Palestinian people in their drive to regain their national rights and to promote the process of attaining a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement, according to the Jordanian and Egyptian leaders, who jointly addressed a press conference after the conclusion of their talks. The King and President Mubarak also announced that the Higher Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Committee will soon convene to examine ways for promoting bilateral cooperation in cultural, commercial and economic fields. The committee did

not meet as planned last September due to political circumstances and to change in governments in the two countries. In the press conference, King Hussein stressed the need for opening a new chapter in relations among Arab countries to face common challenges. "The meeting with President Mubarak gave me the chance to discuss issues of common concern especially the Palestine problem," the King said, adding that "our stands are the same with regard to supporting the Palestinians and in giving backing for the peace process." "We believe that there is need for a meeting between us and the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat soon, so we can discuss what we can do to promote the peace process." "As to the Iraqi people, we are united in our concern about their destiny and future

and also about the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Iraq and in working towards ending their suffering. They have a right to life, and to attain a free and decent living on their own national soil. We are supporting the Iraqi people with all our might and we hope, God willing, that their suffering will end as soon as possible," the King said to nods of agreement from President Mubarak. Asked what measures the Kingdom would take to relieve the Iraqi people, the King said: "We are definitely concerned with the people there, concerned with their plight, we'll do whatever we can to help. And obviously anything that has to be done, or will come about, will come about from within Iraq itself. But as far as I'm concerned, I have tried my best and will

Arafat hails Cairo summit

AMMAN (Petra) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat Friday praised His Majesty King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's efforts aimed at backing the Palestinian question and people. In statements to Palestine Radio, Mr. Arafat said the tripartite Palestinian-Jordanian-Egyptian summit proposed by the King and the Egyptian president will be held in Cairo to voice support for the Palestinian stand ahead of starting the final status talks with Israel. He gave no date for the summit.

Officials optimistic about King's visits to Saudi Arabia, Egypt; many questions unanswered

By Mohammad Masharqah
AMMAN — Many questions remain unanswered regarding the actual results of His Majesty King Hussein's visits last week to Saudi Arabia and Egypt, despite official optimism over the outcome of the two visits especially in removing the clouds that have hung over relations since the Gulf war. According to a senior official the Iraq question was high on the agenda of both the Mecca and Cairo summits between the King on the one hand and Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah and President Hosni Mubarak on the other. The official said that agreement was reached during those two meetings on a number of points, high among them was on the direct responsibility of the Iraqi regime for the miserable situation that the Iraqi people has reached and that it had become extremely difficult, or almost impossible, to rehabilitate the regime within the prevail-

ing regional and international environment. The official said that the basic agreement arrived at in the discussions among Jordanian, Saudi and Egyptian leaders was that a change of regime in Iraq, when it comes, should be left for the Iraqi people themselves to bring about. There was also a tacit understanding that Jordan's "peaceful" regional role should be recognised. More Arab politicians and Iraqi opposition figures increasingly believe that "change will have to come from inside Iraq" with support coming from the neighbouring countries only if and when it is needed to either prevent a bloodshed or a break-up of the country into ethnic regions or statelets. The observers say that U.S. Secretary of Defence William Perry's recent statements about U.S. cooperation with other countries in the region to accelerate the demise of the Iraqi regime should be taken seriously. They are convinced that King Hussein had exchanged information with the other Arab leaders over what Mr. Perry had in mind. It is in light of all these developments "that Jordan's latest moves to coordinate with Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Morocco took place," one observer said. Informed sources say that the U.S. has put pressure on Damascus to ensure that Syria does not play a spoiler role in efforts over Iraq. They say that the U.S., in order to smooth the way for change in Baghdad, has also intensified its efforts on the Syrian-Israeli track and showed much more understanding for Syria's role in Lebanon. Damascus was recently reported as contemplating holding a conference for Iraqi opposition and at the same time sent mixed signals to Baghdad. These were seen as an attempt to circumvent not only any role for Jordan in Iraq but also any regional effort that involves Jordan as a partner.

A leading Jordanian politician notes that Jordan's position towards Iraq has evolved constantly since the defection of President Saddam Hussein's son-in-law General Hussein Kamel to Jordan in August. That, according to the politician, came in response to fierce resistance put up by other regional forces in Riyadh, Cairo, Damascus and Tehran against the Jordanian role. The politician adds that Jordan's real aims were misinterpreted in the neighbouring countries. "The four players — Riyadh, Cairo, Damascus and Tehran — did not show any real support for Jordan's regional role." The positive signs that came out of the King and Crown Prince Hassan's visits to the four countries indicate a middle-of-the-road meeting among the centres of power in the region, prompting the King to describe these moves as successes that Jordan's foreign policy has met with.

Palestinian police arrest suspected Hamas bomber

JENIN, West Bank (R) — Palestinian police arrested a member of the militant Islamic Hamas movement on suspicion he was planning a suicide attack in Israel. Palestinians said on Friday Family members said Hassan Abu Sariyeh, 18, was arrested in the Jenin refugee camp in the Palestinian self-rule area of the West Bank on Thursday night. Police told them he was suspected of planning a suicide attack, they said. Police were not immediately available to comment. Mr. Abu Sariyeh's brother last month stabbed an Israeli soldier to death in an Israeli military office. He was arrested. Hamas opposes peace deals between the PLO and Israel that have given Palestinians control of the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank. It has killed scores of Israelis in a campaign of attacks designed to undermine the peace process. Israel has demanded the Palestinian self-rule authority curb attacks by Palestinians against Israelis as a condition for continuing to carry out the peace agreements. Israel on Tuesday barred the nearly two million Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza from entering Israel indefinitely saying it had information of planned attacks by Islamic militants.



Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians during the last Friday prayer in the Holy Month of Ramadan in front of the Dome of the Rock Mosque in Jerusalem (AFP photo)

250,000 turn out at Jerusalem Friday prayers

Palestinians, Israelis reach agreement on Rachel's tomb

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (AP) — Hundreds of Palestinians knelt in prayer outside Rachel's tomb on Friday to protest Israel's plans to build a 6-foot-high cement wall around the holy site. The worshippers prayed on cardboard and mats spread on the main Jerusalem-Bethlehem road that runs past Rachel's tomb, believed built at the site where the Biblical matriarch was buried. At the end of the noon prayers, protest organisers announced that Israel had dropped its plan to build a wall that would have cut across one lane of the road and blocked it to traffic. "We hope they respect the agreement," said Salah Taameri, a newly elected member of the Palestinian legislative council who has been leading daily protests at the site this week. "If they don't, we will start the marches again." Rachel's tomb is an Israeli-controlled island in Palestinian ruled Bethlehem, and Israeli officials have said the wall was necessary to protect Israeli visitors from possible attacks by Palestinian militants.

King donates funds for carpeting Jerusalem's Dome of Rock mosque

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has donated funds to replace worn carpets at the Mosque of the Dome of the Rock near Al Aqsa Mosque in Arab East Jerusalem, the Royal Court announced Thursday. The donation is part of the King's continued effort to maintain the Muslim holy shrines of Jerusalem. In 1993 King Hussein donated \$8.24 million to finance the covering of the Dome of the Rock with gold gilded copper sheets and the installation of an alarm system against fire. He also ordered that the Saladdin pulpit at Al Aqsa mosque, that was gutted by a Jewish arsonist in 1968, be reconstructed. In 1993 King Hussein donated JD 50,000 to help finance the restoration of the shrines and tombs of the companions of the Prophet Mohammad buried in Jordan, a project undertaken by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. The Ministry said recently that it was conducting restoration work at the burial places of the six companions of the Prophet buried in the Kingdom.

2 killed, 7 wounded in S. Lebanon fighting

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Two Lebanese guerrillas were killed and an Israeli soldier, five pro-Israeli militiamen and a nine-year-old girl were wounded in South Lebanon on Friday, the Israeli army and Lebanese security sources said. Pro-Israeli security sources said guerrillas had fired rockets and machine guns into 13 outposts of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia in the western and central districts of Israel's South Lebanon occupation zone. The sources said that two guerrillas were killed in the subsequent exchange of fire. Lebanese security sources said that in retaliation for the attacks, Israeli artillery shelled the outskirts of 20 South Lebanon villages facing the zone, wounding a nine-year-old girl in the village of Kfar Tibnit. The Israeli army issued a statement saying: "An Israeli officer suffered medium wounds and three SLA men were lightly wounded this morning in the eastern sector of South Lebanon as a result of massive firing by terrorists from villages beyond the security zone." It added: "In another incident, two SLA men were wounded lightly — an SLA force on a mission in the eastern sector of the security zone encountered an explosive charge."

NATO captures 'terror' camp; Bosnia say it's not

SARAJEVO (R) — NATO forces captured what they called a terrorist camp near Sarajevo, complete with booty-trapped children's intelligence service school. "They are making a lot of fuss over nothing in order to try to embarrass us," a Bosnian government official, who asked not to be named, told Reuters. NATO officers told reporters on Friday they had seized the camp on Muslim-led government territory, taking eight Bosnians and three men presumed to be Iranian instructors into custody. The camp, based in a former ski chalet about 10 kilometres south of Fojnica, contained classrooms and an extensive armory, including explosives, hand-guns, sniper rifles, rocket and grenade launchers, assault rifles and ammunition. Some of the explosive devices captured were built into small children's plastic toys, including a car, a helicopter and an ice cream cone. The Bosnian official denied the base was used to train terrorists. "This place was in the process of being closed down. There were some Iranians arrested but they were about to leave the country. This is all to put pressure on us at the Rome summit."

Fourteen dead as Beirut building demolished

BEIRUT (R) — Fourteen people were killed and eight injured when demolition workers brought down a Beirut building with squatters still inside, a senior police officer said Friday. "It's true there are 13 killed and eight injured," the officer told a Reuters reporter at the scene of Thursday's disaster in a Shiite Muslim slum. He declined to be identified. The Wadi Abu Jamil slum is part of the central district being demolished by Solidere Sola. BL, Lebanon's biggest company, to make way for a modern city centre. The district was once the home of Beirut's Jewish community but is now inhabited by Shiite villagers displaced by the country's 1975-90 civil war and Israel's occupation of a border strip in South Lebanon. Lebanon's main Shiite groups — the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) and the pro-Syrian Amal (Movement of the Dispossessed)

Iraq releases 1991 Shiite uprising leaders

By Salameh Ne'matt
Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — Iraq plans to release soon the jailed leaders of the Shiite uprising of 1991 in a measure aimed to undermine Iran's attempts to move the Shiite's spiritual base from Najaf in southern Iraq to Oom in Iran, relatives of these leaders said Friday. The relatives, who arrived in Amman recently, said that the prisoners have been informed of "the decision by the Iraqi authorities to release them soon, on the fifth anniversary of the Shiite uprising." According to them, there are six out of an original 10 jailed Shiite leaders who are still in jail. Four were released earlier. The remaining six, who represent the highest "reference" for the Najaf-based Shiite leadership, are Ayatollah Izzeddin Bahr Al Uloum, Ayatollah Ala' Bahr Al Uloum, Hujjat Al Islam Hassan Mousa Bahr El Uloum, Ayatollah Mohammad Rida Khalkhali, Assayed Ibrahim, who is the eldest son of the Imam Aba Al-Qassem Al Khou'i, and the Lebanese Islamic thinker Ali Al Jaafar. Informed sources said that the absence of these leading Shiite thinkers has weakened the seat of the Shiites in Najaf and provided Iran with a pretext to move the seat to Oom. They added that the Iraqi move to release these leaders was designed as "a gesture of goodwill" towards "compliance with the principles of human rights." They pointed out that the Iraqi authorities were also planning to release tens of thousands of Iraqis who participated in the uprising in the Shiite governorates following the Gulf war, as a step before allowing human rights groups to inspect Iraqi prisons. The release of the Shiite leaders is expected to annoy the Iranians, the sources stressed.

(Continued on page 7)

Hizbollah guerrillas attack

While precise details of the raid have not been disclosed, the French captain who led the action told reporters the operation was "no problem — no shooting, no casualties, nobody escaped. We were very quick." The NATO team, using helicopters, dropped into a narrow, snow-clad valley ab-

(Continued on page 7)

UAE parliament calls for permanent constitution

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) appointed parliament wants the Gulf country to adopt a permanent constitution to ensure its seven sheikhdoms will remain united, the official media reported Friday.

The Federal National Council (FNC), in a policy statement, said the UAE was still governed by an interim constitution although the merger of Abu Dhabi, Dubai and five other emirates has exceeded 24 years.

"The interim constitution was issued in a transitional stage through which the country will move from a state of separation to a state of federation," said the statement, carried by the official news agency WAM.

"The constitution was a result of several historical, political, economic and social considerations," it said. "The

federal experiment has succeeded and the democratic process has grown and developed. A revision of the interim constitution has become a pressing national demand."

The UAE was created in 1971 from a merger of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Fujairah, Ajman, Ras Al Khaimah and Umm Al Quwain, which had been known as the crucial states before Britain ended its colonial presence in the Gulf in 1971.

Abu Dhabi's ruler Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan, who is president of the UAE, was the architect of the federation. He started his contacts with neighbouring emirates just after he took over as ruler in 1966.

The 79-year-old leader has been president since the merger and he has been successfully reelected for five-year terms. The post of vice presi-

dent and prime minister has been held by Dubai, the second largest and richest member.

The highest decision-making body in the UAE is the Federal Supreme Council (FSC), which is made up of the rulers of the seven sheikhdoms.

Officials and citizens have repeatedly called for the enactment of a permanent constitution to strengthen the image of the UAE as the most successful unity experience in contemporary Arab history.

The FNC issued its latest call for a durable constitution in a statement, which was in response to an address by Sheikh Zayed during the opening session of the 41-member council late last year. The text was handed to the UAE leader by FNC Speaker Al Haj Ibn Abdullah Al Muhrabi Thursday night.

It referred to a decision by the FSC in 1991 to set up a committee to study a permanent constitution but it did not make clear if it had been formed.

"The FNC is looking forward to the time when there will be a permanent constitution that will respond to development needs and ambitions of the people for consolidating the pillars of the federation and its institutions and deepening the democratic experience," the statement said.

Apart from the removal of border posts, the UAE merger covers the army, currency and other economic sectors. But each member has maintained an autonomous policy in running its own affairs.

Diplomats said such a relative independence was one of the factors that guaranteed the survival of the federation.



RAMADAN IN JERUSALEM: Palestinians pray at Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque Friday, marking the last Friday prayers of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan (Reuters photo)

Peres holds lead — poll SLA frees 30 prisoners

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres's lead over rival Benjamin Netanyahu held this week after his call for early elections, polls published on Friday showed.

Mr. Peres, riding a wave of sympathy since the November assassination of his predecessor Yitzhak Rabin by a right-wing Jew, on Sunday called for elections to be moved forward from their latest possible date in October. A date in May or June is expected to be set next week.

A Dahaf poll in Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper said

Mr. Peres would win 50 per cent of the vote compared with 37 per cent for Mr. Netanyahu, who heads the right-wing main opposition Likud Party.

If Likud member David Levy ran as an independent for prime minister, Dahaf found Mr. Peres would then get 49 per cent, Mr. Netanyahu 35 and Levy five per cent.

A Gallup poll in the Maariv daily found 47 per cent would vote for Mr. Peres, 29 per cent for Mr. Netanyahu, six per cent for Mr. Levy and 18 per cent said they would not vote for

any of them.

In the parliamentary election, the Gallup poll found Labour would win 47 of the 120 seats in parliament against 37 for a combined list of Likud and the ultra-nationalist Tsomet.

Likud and Tsomet recently initiated a deal to run together but Likud's central committee has yet to approve the pact.

Mr. Peres has led Mr. Netanyahu in polls since Mr. Rabin was killed Nov. 4 as he left a Tel Aviv peace rally.

BEIRUT (R) — The Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia freed 30 prisoners on Friday from its Khiam Jail in South Lebanon, SLA sources said.

The prisoners were the second group freed this year from the jail in Israel's South Lebanon occupation zone and brought the number of releases since February 1995 to 117.

The SLA sources gave no reason for freeing the captives but it normally frees some prisoners for

the Muslim feast of Eid Al Fitr, which marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan. This year's feast falls early next week.

Those freed included 17 inhabitants of the 15-kilometre wide border zone. The others were five Syrians, five Palestinians and three Lebanese from outside the zone.

Some 170 Lebanese and other Arabs are still held without trial at Khiam. They are mostly anti-Israeli guerrillas, villagers who refuse to pay taxes to the SLA, and people who

refuse to allow their sons to be conscripted into the SLA.

The International Committee of the Red Cross carried out its first inspection of Khiam jail last October after reports of torture and deaths inside the prison.

Israel carved out the 15 kilometres wide South Lebanon occupation zone in 1985 when it withdrew the bulk of its 1982 invasion force. It is the last active Israeli-Arab front.

Egypt prises 'forgotten pyramids' from military

DAHSHOUR, Egypt (R) — Egypt will soon reap the rewards from one of its best endowed pyramid fields when the site opens to the public in a few months after 40 years masquerading as a military base.

Looming over the sands of the village of Dahshour, the pyramids — hailed by archaeologists as second only to the famous trio near Cairo — are under civilian control after two years of intensive negotiations, wrangling and blackmail.

Seneferu, whose pyramid was the largest before his son Cheops upstaged him and built the great pyramid of Giza, also inadvertently built Egypt's only "bent" or Rhomboidal pyramid.

Resembling a pavilion, the pyramid was built with two different angles of elevation after the tip of the nearby Maydum pyramid caved in because the stones used on top were too heavy.

Reluctant to create a step in construction, the pyramid's builders just reduced the angle and archaeologists say this is probably where the pharaoh is buried.

"I told the army that if they did not withdraw, I was going to tell the world they were destroying Egypt's archaeological heritage," said Ali Hassan, undersecretary of state for archaeology and liberator of the Dahshour pyramids.

"This is the area where the desert is virgin, where you can taste the history of Egypt. Dahshour has traces of both the old and middle kingdoms. It is impossible to exclude archaeologists and tourists from such an area," said Mr. Hassan, who headed the talks with the defence ministry.

Since 1956, the military and later the state-owned Gulf of Suez Petroleum Company (GUPCO) were Dahshour's only residents. The site still serves as an army depot and training camp but now the base has moved a few kilometres back from the pyramids.

Forty kilometres south of Cairo, Dahshour is littered with ancient monuments. The 12th dynasty Pharaoh Amenemhat III built a rare mud-brick structure the ruins of which can still be seen where in modern times King Farouk used to go duck hunting.

Visitors to the outskirts of this tiny village will be able to enter for the first time Egypt's second largest pyramid, built for the Pharaoh Seneferu over 4,500 years ago.

Preparations to make the deserted site commercial will be finished as early as June, Mr. Hassan said, but Mr. Hassan predicted it would take at least six months longer.

Visitors will be able to enter almost all the Dahshour pyramids after excavators clear them of the damage caused by grave robbers and by time.

All the structures had been coated with limestone, the traditional pharaonic covering for the pyramids, but only that of the bent pyramid remains intact.

Last year, archaeologists dug out a cache of gold jewelry from beneath the dust mound that remains of the mud brick pyramid complex of Seneferu III, and Mr. Hassan expects much more will be unearthed.

"One of our most important archaeological sites has been added to the tourism map. There remains much to be seen at Dahshour," he said.

Farrakhan's Mideast contacts come under scrutiny in U.S.

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. authorities are preparing to confront black activist Louis Farrakhan when he returns next week from a tour that saw him shake hands with the leaders of several nations accused of terrorism.

Mr. Farrakhan, the controversial leader of the Nation of Islam movement, was to face questions from the U.S. Justice Department about his month-long trip to 23 countries in the Middle East, Africa and the Gulf, a spokesman said.

"We have prepared a letter to be sent to him to determine the facts," said Justice Department spokesman John Russell.

Mr. Russell declined to comment on whether the letter could pave the way for a full investigation of Mr. Farrakhan's visits to countries such as Iraq, Iran and Libya which are on the U.S. list of nations supporting terrorism.

But in Congress, one legislator maintains that Mr. Farrakhan has violated at least five U.S. laws by staging his world friendship tour, which also saw him get

the red carpet treatment from the military regime in Nigeria.

"Louis Farrakhan has been paying courtesy calls to the most murderous regimes on the face of the earth," Republican representative Peter King charged this week.

The State Department has at least twice lashed out at Mr. Farrakhan over his meetings with Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi last month and this week for calling the United States "great Satan" in Iran.

"The blood of Americans is on Kadafi's hands, and it's on the Iranian hands," State Department spokesman Nick Burns said.

Mr. Farrakhan grabbed headlines in the United States in October when he spearheaded the organisation of the "Million Man March," a rally of African American men that was billed as a consciousness-raising event.

But his meetings with the leaders of the headline regimes including a stopover this week in Iraq where he met with President

Saddam Hussein has underscored to many his extremist views about race relations.

Mr. King maintains that Mr. Farrakhan's trip was in violation of the foreign agent registration act, which calls on U.S. citizens to declare if they are paid to lobby in the United States on behalf of a foreign country.

The accusation resulted from a Jan. 26 report from the Libyan news agency JANA that Mr. Qadhafi had agreed to contribute one billion dollars to support Mr. Farrakhan's political goals.

Mr. King has also cited the Logan Act which prevents private citizens from conducting their own foreign policy, but Mr. Russell said that law had never been invoked because of questions concerning its constitutionality.

Dan Michaelis, a spokesman for representative King, said Mr. Farrakhan would be asked to testify at congressional hearings next month.

A spokeswoman at the Chicago-based Nation of Islam headquarters said Mr.

Farrakhan was to return to the United States next week ahead of an address to a black Muslim conference on Feb. 25.

In a separate but related development, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Nassau County police in New York State launched an investigation after Mr. King received a death threat on Thursday that was linked to his criticism of Mr. Farrakhan.

Nassau County police Lieutenant Matthew Brady said Mr. King, who was in his home state on Friday, was under police protection after his constituency office in Long Island, New York received a threatening anonymous phone call.

The caller described Mr. King as "a piece of racist slime" and complained that the lawmaker was "harassing" Reverend Farrakhan.

"We're going to come down there and pull every white cracker out of the office and put a bullet in their head," the caller said, according to Mr. Michaelis.

Mr. Brady said police had not determined whether the call was linked to the Nation



FARRAKHAN ADDRESSES THE IRAQI PRESS: U.S. black leader addresses the press in Baghdad Thursday. Mr. Farrakhan met Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and denounced Washington's "wicked" policy towards Baghdad that he said was leading to the "mass murder" of the Iraqi people. Mr. Farrakhan left Iraq on Friday (Reuters photo)

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
14:00	Moonlight (cartoon)
14:30	Wish Kid (cartoon)
15:00	Harry and the Hendersons
15:25	Blue Heelers
16:00	Drama — Okavango
17:00	Doc. — Omniscience
17:30	Doc. — Les Compagnons de L'Adventure
18:00	Doc. — Chateau Valfon
19:00	News in French
19:15	Magazine — Futur Pas Revier
19:30	News Headlines
19:35	Major Dad
20:00	Doc. — The Stamp of Greatness
20:25	Drama — Hawaii Five-0
21:10	Drama — A Fine Romance (Ep. II)
22:00	News in English
22:25	Doc. — A Journey Across the Land of Islam
22:45	Feature film
23:30	Mancuso FBI
PRAYER TIMES	
6:55	Fajr
12:15	Dhuhr
14:58	Asr
17:26	Maghrib
18:44	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR		
Deaths	3/16	
Jordan Valley	10/21	
Yesterday's high temperatures:		
Amman	15, Aqaba	22 Humidity
readings:	Amman	50 per cent, Aqaba
46 per cent.		
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS		
NIGHT DUTY		
AMMAN:		
Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab	750448	
Dr. Awni Al Hawamdeh	832350	
Dr. Isam Al Azzam	890514	
Dr. Khalid Asfour	646873	
Firas pharmacy	661912	
Ferdows pharmacy	778336	
Al Asma pharmacy	637055	
Nairokh pharmacy	625672	
Al Salam pharmacy	636730	
Yaenub pharmacy	646945	
Shmiciani pharmacy	637661	
Najih pharmacy	847632	
IRBID:		
Dr. Ahmad Qanu	281741	
Alquds pharmacy	(—)	
ZARQA:		
Dr. Zuhur Al Qadi	906906	
Khalil pharmacy	905417	
EMERGENCIES		
Food Control Centre	637111	
Civil Defence Department	661111	
Civil Defence Immediate		
Rescue	630341	
Civil Defence Emergency	199	
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777	
Fire Brigade	617101	
Blood Bank	775121	
Highway Police	843402	
Traffic Police	896390	
Public Security Department	630321	
Hotel Complaints	605599	
Price Complaints	661176	
Water and Sewerage		
Complaints	897467	
Amman Municipality		
Complaints	787111	
Telephone Information	(directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230	
Central Amman Telephone		
Repairs	623101	
Abduli Telephone Repairs	661101	
Radio Jordan	773111	
Water Authority	681100	
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615	
Electric Power Company		
RJ Flight Information	18-53350	
Queen Alia Int'l. Airport	18-53320	
HOSPITALS		
AMMAN:		
Hussain Medical Centre	813813/2	
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	644281/6	
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	642441/2	
Jahid Amman Maternity	642362	
Mathus, J. Amman	636140	
Palestine, Shmiciani	607071	
Shmiciani Hospital	669131	
University Hospital	848455	
Al-Muasher Hospital	6672779	
The Islamic, Abdali	666127/7	
Al-Ahli, Abdali	664164/6	
Italian, Al-Muhajreen	777101/3	
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	775111/26	
Army, Marka	891611/15	
Queen Alia Hospital	612234/5	
Amal Hospital	674155	
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery	605199	
ZARQA:		
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	0199833/3	
Zarqa National Hospital		
Ibn Sina Hospital	0199856/0	
Al Hikma Modern Hospital	0199709/0	
Princess Basma Hospital	01272555	
Greek Catholic Hospital	01272775	
Al Nafes Hospital	012347100	
QABA:		
Princess Haya Hospital	01314111	
FOR THE TRAVELLER		
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT		
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel: (015) 3331, 5, where it should always be verified.		

DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ)	
Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:25	Beirut (RJ)
06:30	Aqaba (RJ)
06:30	Vienna (RJ)
11:30	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:45	Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
11:50	Paris, Brussels (RJ)
12:05	Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
12:15	Cairo (RJ)
12:45	Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
12:55	Larnaca (RJ)
13:10	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
13:15	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
13:50	Jeddah (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
12:40	Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)
13:30	Rome (AZ)
15:00	Dubai (EK)
15:10	Beirut (ME)
15:20	Paris, Damascus (AF)
15:30	Larnaca (CY)
15:45	Cairo (MS)
15:55	Athens, Beirut (OA)
16:15	Amsterdam (KL)
16:25	London, Damascus (BA)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights (Marka Airport)	
21:25	Aqaba (RW)
22:25	Aqaba (RW)
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ)	
Flights (Terminal 1)	
05:15	Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
09:00	Damascus (RJ)
09:00	Aqaba (RJ)
09:30	New Delhi (RJ)
09:55	Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
10:05	Beirut (RJ)
10:20	Colombo (RJ)
10:45	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
16:20	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
17:55	London, Berlin (RJ)
19:40	Vienna (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
07:45	Beirut (ME)
13:30	Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
15:20	Rome (AZ)
15:30	Vienna (OS)
19:15	Dubai (EK)
22:55	Larnaca (CY)
23:25	Damascus, Paris (AF)
00:25	Amsterdam (KL)
03:00	Beirut, Athens (OA)
03:05	London (BA)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights (Marka Airport)	
07:00	Aqaba (RW)
07:00	Aqaba (RW)
HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Dep. Amman	8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus	3:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Amman	7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman	5:00 p.m. every Sunday
MARKET PRICES	
Upplower price in fils per kg.	
Apple	700/500
Banana	600/600
Banana (Mukammal)	520/520
Banana (imported)	520/600
Cabbage	40/40
Carrot	170/100
Cauliflower	180/100
Cucumbers (large)	150/100
Cucumbers (small)	200/100
Eggplant	200/150
Garlic	1000/800
Grape Fruit	400/300
Lemon	400/250
Marrow (large)	120/100
Marrow (small)	230/120
Onion (green)	140/100
Onion (dry)	210/150
Orange	160/100
Pepper (hot)	500/400
Pepper (sweet)	540/400
Potato	220/150
Radish	160/100
Spring Beans	700/500
Spinach	160/100
Tomato	150/80



LAST FRIDAY PRAYERS OF RAMADAN: His Majesty King Hussein joins worshippers at the last Friday prayers of Ramadan at Rabi' al-Amar Mosque in the Nuzha district of Amman. The congregation listened to a sermon which stressed the importance of good deeds, giving alms and helping the underprivileged, not only during Ramadan but also throughout the year. Sheikh Abdul Rahman Al Kurdi called on the people to learn from the Hashemites and their dean, King Hussein, who has selflessly assisted the poor, the helpless and the vulnerable. Attending the prayer were Their Royal Highnesses the Princes, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, the Royal Court Chief, the King's advisors, the Minister of Awqaf and senior civil and military officials. After the prayer, worshippers gathered around the King, congratulating him on the coming of the Eid al-Fitr (Petra photo)

PRIVATE VISIT:

Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath Friday leave for the United Kingdom on a several-day private visit. Accompanied by their daughter, HRH Princess Rahma, Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath were seen off by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal, Prince Zeid Ben Shaker, Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, Prince Ali Ben Nayef, Princess Sumaya and her husband Nasser Judeh, Sharifah Fadimeh, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Chief of the Royal Court Awn Khasawneh and the British Chargé d'Affaires in Amman (Petra photo)



Kabariti, new PSD chief discuss department's mandate

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Friday visited the Public Security Department (PSD) and met with Maj. Gen. Nasouh Moheiddin, who assumed office as PSD director on Thursday.

The prime minister discussed with Gen. Moheiddin his new mandate which, as an official statement said later, aims at, safeguarding national security and stability by providing the best services to the country's citizens.

Gen. Moheiddin (59) took office shortly after an official announcement was made — a day or two after observers started learning of his "surprise" appointment.

Gen. Moheiddin succeeded Lieutenant General Abdul Rahman Adwan who retired from active service (see adjacent story).

Before his appointment to the new post Gen. Moheiddin was Director General of the Passports and Civil Registration Department, a post which he assumed two years after he resigned from the PSD in 1989.

He is widely known as a professional policeman, having spent all his working years in the service.

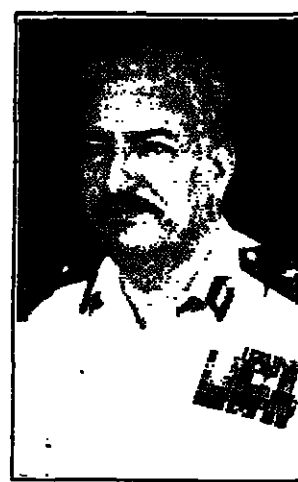
Government watchers praised his performance as Director General of the Passports Department, where he reduced bureaucratic red-tape and considerably speeded up the time needed to obtain a passport. Government sources, on the other hand, told the Jordan Times yesterday that although the choice of Gen. Moheiddin to head the PSD was a "surprise" choice to many, it was "the right one."

"What the police department needs at this time of new openness towards the people by the new government is for a professional Director. Gen. Moheiddin is the 'right man' to handle that task," said one government official.

Three other contenders were mentioned for the job of PSD director before Gen. Moheiddin was finally selected. They were Gen. Samih Bino of the General Intelligence Directorate, Gen. Ghazi Al Tayeb of the Army, and the King's military aide, Hmaid Al Fayez. The decision to appoint



Abdul Karim Kabariti



Nasouh Moheiddin

Gen. Moheiddin was taken by the Council of Ministers and endorsed by a Royal Decree, as the law stipu-

lates. Gen. Moheiddin is married and has five daughters and two sons.

King pays tribute to Adwan

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein paid tribute to Lieutenant General Abdul Rahman Adwan, who retired from active service as Director General of the Public Security Department (PSD).

In a letter to Gen. Adwan on Thursday, the King praised his efforts in serving the country and in carrying out his duties.

"I know that since I entrusted you with heading the PSD, you were working diligently and sincerely to develop it and upgrade the performance of its personnel," King Hussein said.

"I also know that you worked during your service ... to build bridges of confidence and cooperation between the department and all citizens, with the objective of ensuring the rule of law and spreading the

spirit of security and tranquility among the members of our large united Jordanian family," the King said.

"Now that you chose to rest after these numerous years of distinguished service, I accept your resignation, stressing my deep appreciation of and pride in you and your loyalty," the King added.

Earlier in the day, Gen. Adwan sent a letter to the King outlining his achievements while serving as PSD director.

He said he was keen to provide the necessary training for the department's personnel to improve their performance and through cutting bureaucracy.

Gen. Adwan said he had focused on improving ties between policemen and citizens and on protecting public freedoms.

UNRWA staff to postpone strike; say they will await visit of new commissioner

By Ghaila Alul
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) staff representatives decided to postpone their general strike scheduled for Feb. 25 to March 12 because of the planned visit of UNRWA Commissioner General Peter Hansen to Jordan early next month.

"We postponed our general strike out of good intentions. It will be an opportunity for Mr. Hansen to do something for us," a staff representative told the Jordan Times.

He added that the postponement of the strike will be the last chance for UNRWA to look into the workers' demands and find

ways to heed them. "The ball is in their court," said the representative.

In a statement to UNRWA employees, staff representatives explained that the decision to postpone the strike and wait for the commissioner general would lessen the harm that the strike would have on the workers.

Staff representatives praised the workers' enthusiasm to hold the strike which they said will force the agency to meet their demands, and urged them to remain united.

"Workers' unity should be put above all considerations," staff representatives said in the statement.

UNRWA workers have taken a series of measures

against the agency. They held several strikes and sit-ins last year demanding better health, education and social services as well as salary raises.

Last week UNRWA workers criticised the agency's attempt to conduct a survey on its employees in Jordan to determine pay equity, saying the agency omitted the fringe benefits government employees in Jordan are entitled to.

Therefore, staff representatives decided to go on with the general strike which they said would hinder the agency's services to refugees in Jordan.

A staff representative had earlier told the Jordan Times that the strike would also paralyse all UNRWA

services especially its 201 schools that provide education to almost 15,000 students.

He added that the strike will be similar to the one staged by workers in the West Bank which succeeded in pressuring the agency into meeting their demands and raising their salaries by 13 per cent.

But UNRWA workers decided to wait for Mr. Hansen who, they said, has promised to look into their demands and try to find ways to satisfy them.

"Past experiences taught us not to have faith in any promises unless they were firm," a staff representative told the Jordan Times.

U.S. FAA designates Jordan Category 1 Country

AMMAN (J.T.) — The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has designated Jordan a Category One country, thus assuring Royal Jordanian Airlines continued access to its destinations in the United States, a United States Information Service (USIS) statement said Friday.

According to the statement, Jordan is one of only three countries in the Middle East that have achieved Category One status this far.

The FAA is responsible for ensuring that foreign air carriers flying to and from the United States operate in accordance with safety standards of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the United Nations' technical

agency for aviation which establishes international standards and recommended practices for aircraft operations and maintenance.

Working closely in cooperation with the Jordan Civil Aviation Authority (JCAA), the FAA determined that Royal Jordanian Airlines and the JCAA fully meet ICAO standards, the USIS statement said.

Category Two countries may only operate on a restricted basis in the United States, and Category Three countries are barred from flying to the United States, according to the statement.

New ministry panels to formulate licensing rules for bus routes, nightclubs

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Interior Awad Khleifat has created a special committee to formulate principles and rules governing the granting of licences to bus and taxi companies seeking to operate on new routes in the country. According to a report in Al Ra'i Arabic daily Friday, the committee, which is headed by the Interior Ministry's secretary general, groups representatives of the Traffic Department, the Vehicles and Drivers Licensing Department, the

ministries of Transport and Public Works, as well as the Drivers Union.

The minister also formed a committee to revise the principles and rules governing the granting of licences to nightclubs.

Jordan, U.S. edge closer to negotiating accord on intellectual property rights, says envoy

By Ghaila Alul
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan and the United States are edging closer to negotiating an intellectual property rights agreement after Jordan modifies its domestic legislation, U.S. Ambassador in Amman Wesley Egan told journalists at the 4th annual American Computer Show Thursday.

Gary Grappo, commercial attaché at the U.S. embassy, said the United States has pressed Jordan to upgrade the level of protection provided by copyright laws in Jordan.

"At the present time they are not adequate, but I think the Jordanian government understands that, and there is a sincere effort under way to improve the level of protection," he added.

Jordan has applied for membership in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), therefore it is expected to maintain a certain international standard in

terms of copyright protection, Mr. Grappo told journalists. "Jordan will (join) the WTO, when they do, they like other members will have a certain level of protection," he added.

Mr. Egan said that Jordan and the U.S. have not begun to negotiate the agreement yet. But they are in the process of negotiating a bilateral investment treaty first, he added.

"Once that is done, then I will have some discussions with your authorities about when the time will be right to begin negotiations on the intellectual property rights. I am confident that the time is not too far away," Mr. Egan said at the show which "seeks to strengthen U.S.-Jordanian bilateral ties in general and bilateral industrial cooperation."

"The show gives Jordan an opportunity to see the latest developments in the U.S. computer industry and introduces Jordanian end-users to the American computer producers," said an

embassy statement. The two-day show, which was inaugurated by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah and Princess Rania, was organised by the American embassy and representatives of American manufacturers and exporting firms in Jordan.

Over 30 companies, representing many U.S. computer hardware and software firms are taking part in the show. In addition to displaying the latest in computer hardware and software technology, the show also provides the public with an opportunity to view data processing and information systems technology as well as new accessories and peripheral devices.

The computer show coincided with the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first computer ever built in the world, Mr. Grappo said.

He added that U.S. Vice President Al Gore this week attended a ceremony in Philadelphia to commemo-

rate the building of that computer in the U.S.

"That computer opened up an information revolution, today here in Jordan we are seeing that revolution take place as companies throughout Jordan and business sectors are participating in this information revolution," he said.

He added that Sprint, a tremendous information tool, will soon be opening the Internet which will be accessible to every Jordanian.

"We are excited about the opportunity for Jordanians to take their place in this information revolution," he added. Mr. Grappo pointed to the importance of the American firms attached to the Jordanian market, and said that the American companies participating in the show such as IBM, Sprint, Microsoft and Apple Macintosh are marketed by Jordanian companies.

Although the Jordanian market is not a large market in comparison with the

U.S., Mr. Grappo said, the presence of American products in Jordan make it an important market.

Mr. Grappo said he was delighted that the American embassy is hosting the show, adding that he believed that American products and services in information technology lead the world in terms of quality, advancement in technology and price.

He said he believed that Jordanians who sell American products and know-how in addition to the products and services that are available to them, will be able to use their own expertise, knowledge and talents as well as create businesses in a variety of sectors.

Mr. Egan said that the computer industry in Jordan is doing extremely well because of its literate workforce and its "increasingly aggressive and influential private sector that is not only looking to other markets in the region but other markets in the world."

He noted that over the last

four years, the rate of growth and information systems in Jordan has increased, adding that users will soon be able to connect easily to information systems worldwide.

"I think once that happens, the demand for computer services and information systems and software services in Jordan will begin to grow even faster," he added.

He said the Middle East and North Africa Economic Summit in October last year exposed many people in the U.S. to the Jordanian market and to the potential of investment in Jordan.

"One of the things I'm trying to do is to interest the American private sector in additional investment in Jordan. It is one of the sectors in which that potential is greatest," he said.

The show is co-sponsored by 12 companies.

Japan supports rug production project in Madaba area

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government of Japan extended a \$86,458 grant to "the rugs production project for local bedouin women" which will be implemented by Society for the Development and Rehabilitation of the Rural Women, a Japanese embassy statement said.

The grant, said the statement, falls within the framework of the Japanese Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects (GAGP).

The grant contract was signed Thursday by Takayuki Kimura, Ambassador of Japan in Amman, and Selta Haddid, president of Society for the Development and Rehabilitation of the Rural Women, the statement said.

According to the Japanese embassy, the rugs production project, for local bedouin women aims at developing the living standards of the bedouin women in and around Madaba by training them to produce high-quality rugs.

The grant, said the statement, is expected to be used to establish the rugs production centre, which is composed of a dyeing centre, weaving centre, social centre, and nursery, the statement said.

Funds from the grant will also be used to purchase weaving looms, dyeing chemicals, dyeing equipment, a bus to transport the women between their homes and the centre and a pick-up truck, to help the society promote the projects, said the statement.

The GAGP was introduced in Jordan in 1993, and aims at extending assistance mainly to non-governmental organisations, research institutes, hospitals and local governments.

Under this aid scheme, grant assistance has so far been extended to 16 projects in Jordan amounting to \$1,067,288.

Yeltsin admits Chechenya war may have been mistake

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin admitted Friday that the war in Chechenya, which started when he poured troops into the north Caucasus republic in December 1994, may have been a mistake.

Speaking to factory workers in the Urals city of Chelyabinsk, Mr. Yeltsin said he had made mistakes during his five-year tenure as president "and maybe one of them was Chechenya," ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

"I have spent many sleepless nights wondering whether, perhaps, one could have acted differently," said Mr. Yeltsin, speaking on the first day of his campaign for re-election.

However, Mr. Yeltsin accused the Chechen separatists led by Dzhokhar Dudayev of repeatedly breaking accords reached with the Russian authorities, and said "it is difficult to reach an agreement with the Chechen gunmen."

"One has to use force against them, so that the Chechens can live peacefully, and we will help them in that," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Interfax News Agency quoted Mr. Yeltsin as saying that if Russian troops were withdrawn from Chechenya "gunmen will seize Dagestan, Karachayev-Cherkessia and other republics and there will be international terrorism and banditry."

He added that Russia had enough forces guarding Chechenya's borders to prevent gunmen and weapons entering the republic "through Azerbaijan, Turkey, Iran or Pakistan."

On Thursday, Mr. Yeltsin called for the separatist leaders to be arrested and shot.

He admitted that the crisis could compromise his chances of winning the June 16 presidential elections if it continued and added that he was planning to reduce Russia's military presence in Chechenya.

In comments to local people in the Urals town of Yekaterinburg, Mr. Yeltsin also accused Turkey and Iran of

helping train Chechenya's separatist rebels, who are mainly Muslims.

"We will ask for the leaders — Dudayev, (Shamil) Basayev and (Salman) Raduyev to be handed over to us. They should be shot," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Despite his remarks at a monument to victims of the war in Afghanistan, where Moscow had troops for 10 years and began withdrawing them exactly seven years ago, there appeared little chance of the rebels handing over their leaders.

Mr. Basayev led a hostage-taking raid in the southern Russian town of Budennovsk last June in which more than 120 people were killed. Mr. Raduyev commanded a similar raid in Dagestan in southern Russia last month which embarrassed the Kremlin.

Mr. Dudayev is hiding in Chechnya's southern mountains. The Russian authorities have been unable to find and arrest him, although journalists have frequently visited him since he took to the mountains almost a year ago.

Mr. Yeltsin said he hoped to end the 14-month-old conflict in Chechenya before Russia's presidential election on June 16.

"The war in Chechenya must be ended. I think we will manage to do this. I would like it to be before the elections — the sooner, the better," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Mr. Yeltsin did not say how he hoped to end the fighting in Chechenya but hoped that the rebels could be split up and rounded up in groups of about 40 or 50. They would then be tried, he said.

Mr. Yeltsin said the rebels were "armed to the teeth" and young, inexperienced Russian soldiers were facing stubborn resistance.

"They are facing professionals trained in Turkey, Iran and other countries," Mr. Yeltsin said. He gave no more details.

Yeltsin hits campaign trail in Urals

CHELYABINSK, Russia (R) — Boris Yeltsin, hitting the presidential campaign trail in the Urals, pledged Friday to reform Russia's banking system and cut inflation.

Mr. Yeltsin, who said Thursday he would seek a second term, warned that under his Communist rival Gennady Zyuganov, reforms would be turned back and capital would start flowing out of Russia.

"It is hard to imagine (what will happen) if someone else is elected president. Then all elements of reforms will be put in reverse gear," Interfax News Agency quoted Mr. Yeltsin as telling businessmen in Chelyabinsk, about 1,500 kilometres east of Moscow.

"This cannot be allowed to happen," he said, adding that he was relying on Russia's businessmen to relay his message.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, announced Thursday in his home town of Yekaterinburg in the Ural Mountains that it was his duty to seek a second term to see through reforms and prevent civil war.

His comments in Chelyabinsk, a centre of the chemical industry, marked the start of hard campaigning for the election, now four months away, and put the economy at the top of the list of campaign issues.

"June 16 will determine whether capital will flow in to Russia or start to leave Russia," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Among his proposals was a vow to improve the banking system in what he calls the third stage of his reforms. He said this would mean reducing the number of banks, which number about 2,500, and weeding out corruption. Many banks are simply small, speculative operators dealing in foreign currency.

"The Russian banking system is still weak. Its reform is a vital element of the third stage of Russian economic reform," he said.

He vowed to reduce inflation from 4.1 per cent in January and an expected three to 3.5 per cent in February.

"I would like this year to get inflation down to two per cent a month. This is stability," he said.

In a further signal that Mr. Yeltsin is ready to make populist promises to boost his hopes of victory, he vowed to ensure wages and pensions are paid on time from March. Many workers receive their pay late because of their employers' cash-flow problems.

Mr. Yeltsin, who was elected president in June 1991, faces a tough battle for re-election and has already promised money to coalminers, teachers, students and pensioners.

He suffered two heart attacks last year and his popularity has waned as economic reforms have impoverished millions of people and fighting has raged with rebel forces in Chechenya.

Mr. Yeltsin will be hoping television networks use their powerful influence in the vast country to back him. He confirmed Friday he had sacked Oleg Poptsov, head of the second channel of Russian State Television and Radio (RTR).

Mr. Yeltsin has accused Mr. Poptsov of inaccuracies but Mr. Poptsov denies the charge.

Mr. Zyuganov, 51, is likely to be his main challenger. He was confirmed as the Communist Party's presidential candidate at a party conference in Moscow Thursday. Other candidates include ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky.

Mr. Zyuganov has assured foreign investors they have nothing to fear from Communist rule but liberals say he has two sides — and the image for home consumption would reverse market reforms.

In a reaction to Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Zyuganov announcing their candidacy, the United States said Thursday it would not favour anyone but made clear it strongly opposed the policies advocated by Zyuganov.

The U.S. State Department left no doubt that it wanted one of Russia's reformers to win the June 16 election and said it sup-

ported the idea of them uniting around a single candidate.

Mixed reaction

Meanwhile President Yeltsin's decision Thursday to seek re-election in June prompted mixed reaction in Russia and many of his likely opponents gave him little chance of success. "Yeltsin is a weak rival," Interfax News Agency quoted Mr. Zyuganov as saying, even before Mr. Yeltsin had announced he was standing.

Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, whom Mr. Yeltsin replaced in the Kremlin and who is dropping heavy hints he may himself stand in the June 16 poll despite his near-zero popularity at home, had harsh words about his former protégé.

"Yeltsin has come to an end as well as his policy," he told Reuters. "If the election is free and fair, he is unlikely to find support." Liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky, who has been nominated by his Yabloko Party, said Mr. Yeltsin's chances next June 16 were "minimal".

Yegor Gajdar, who spearheaded Mr. Yeltsin radical reforms in 1992 but deserted his former boss in disgust over the bloody military operation in rebel Chechenya, said the president's decision was "a serious mistake," Interfax reported.

Mr. Gaidar has said repeatedly that Mr. Yeltsin, because of his unpopularity, would only help the Communists by standing.

Only Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the maverik ultra-nationalist who is expected to be a strong challenger, had encouraging words for Mr. Yeltsin. "I think he has a chance," he told reporters.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy said he expected Mr. Yeltsin, himself and Mr. Zyuganov to get about 30 per cent of votes each in the first round. "But if he continues reforming the government and stops the conflict in Chechenya, his chances may increase to 40 per cent," he said.

So far the only big political force which has thrown its weight behind Mr. Yeltsin is Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's centrist grouping, Our Home Is Russia.

The outspoken former Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov, who heads a small liberal party, also backed Mr. Yeltsin, reluctantly saying it was a choice of "either going to communism or not". Mr. Yeltsin's wife, Naina, who has said she was opposed to Mr. Yeltsin standing for health reasons, told Postfactum News Agency Thursday it was a "very difficult step".

"I was very excited. I watched for a long time how he was coming to his decision silently. He has not discussed it with the family. I also learnt about his decision today," Postfactum quoted her as saying. In Mr. Yeltsin's home town of Yekaterinburg one sympathetic family aired its views — ironically, "I liked Yeltsin's speech," said the wife who gave her name as Tamara. "He knows people. Russians take offence easily but forgive fast. They do not have a long memory for the evil done to them," her husband, Boris, a 35-year-old, was more pragmatic. "I think it would be a good idea to have a presidential election every month — at payday," he said.

But in the Chechen capital Grozny, badly ruined by Russia's air and artillery attacks early last year and still not restored, it seemed impossible to find a single Yeltsin backer.

"We do not respect Yeltsin. He started well but ends badly. Almaz Nagomozov, a 20-year-old businessman told Reuters.

Rebel fighter Musa, cradling his Kalashnikov automatic rifle in the village of Urus-Martan, said: "We want freedom and we will get it. Yeltsin is not president for us. Our president is (rebel leader) Dzhokhar Dudayev. Yeltsin ruined both Russia and Chechenya by this war and covered Russia with shame."

Even a Russian soldier, who gave only his first name, Andrei, was bitter about Mr. Yeltsin. "I do not expect anything good from Yeltsin," he said. "He dragged us into this disaster and our brides and wives wait for us at home. If Yeltsin is elected, the mess here will continue."

Greek guerrillas target U.S. embassy but miss

ATHENS (R) — Greece's left-wing Nov. 17 guerrillas, seizing on a wave of anti-U.S. sentiment, re-emerged from the shadows for the first time in a year and just missed blasting the American embassy with a rocket grenade.

A 3.5 inch rocket-propelled anti-tank grenade ripped through the U.S. embassy parking lot Thursday night, wrecking cars but causing no injuries, police said. The grenade exploded about 100 metres short of the main embassy building in central Athens, blowing out windows in the surrounding area.

"It was an attack with a rocket grenade. It fell short of its target but damaged a number of cars. It appears to have been carried out by the known guerrilla group," Public Order Minister Costas Geitonias told reporters at the scene.

If confirmed, it would be the first attack by the rabidly anti-American guerrillas since last March when they fired two rocket grenades at the private Mega Television Channel during its main nightly news programme.

Mr. Geitonias said all signs pointed to an operation by November 17, which has killed 21 Americans, Greeks and Turks since it first struck in December 1975.

November 17 stole scores of rocket grenades from an army depot in 1989 and has since fired them across main boulevards in a series of attacks, hitting targets such as the American Express, British Petroleum and the European Union offices.

In Washington, State Department officials said a grenade explosion slightly damaged the U.S. embassy in Athens but caused no injuries.

"Early reports are there was some damage to a perimeter wall. We are seeking more details," one official said.

Anti-American sentiment has re-surfaced in Greece, with the media and government officials accusing Washington of siding with Turkey in a row over a barren island in the Aegean Sea.

New Socialist Prime Minister Costas Simitis slammed the door on a planned visit this month by U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke, saying he did not have time for the diplomat. Mr. Simitis is now due to meet President Bill Clinton in Washington on April 9.



Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien (right) grabs unemployment insurance protestor Bill Clennett during a ceremony to mark the 31st anniversary of the Canadian flag in Hull, Quebec Thursday. Mr. Chretien was not injured and the protestor was not arrested (Reuters photo)

Canada premier hits back at protesters

HULL, Quebec (R) — Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien Thursday fought with protesters heckling him about government cuts in unemployment insurance at a ceremony to bolster Canadian unity.

Trying to move through a tight crowd, Mr. Chretien grabbed a demonstrator by the throat before pushing him out of the way. The demonstrator fell to the ground.

Mr. Chretien brushed another man aside who had been heckling him with a bullhorn. While the incident happened very quickly, television news footage did not show that anyone had assaulted Mr. Chretien, although they had been noisily heckling him.

Mr. Chretien told reporters afterwards he did not know exactly what happened.

"Some people came in my way. I had to go. So if you're in my way, I'm walking. I don't know what happened. Somebody should not have been there," he told reporters after the incident.

Deputy Prime Minister Sheila Copps remarked: "I said look, if you have a point to make about unemployment insurance, great. We want to hear you. You don't use that point to destroy the celebration of the Canadian flag."

Moments before, Mr. Chretien had appealed to pride in the Canadian flag and began greeting a crowd of school children and others celebrating national unity.

Chretien spokesman Peter Donolo said it was important to put the incident in the context of a demonstration of "union goons who think they can use brute force and intimidation" and who were swearing at the flag-waving children.

"This lot was pushing little school children out of the way so he could get at the prime minister," Mr. Donolo told Reuters.

Canadian press quoted the demonstrator, Bill Clennett, as saying: "The prime minister pushed me down. I did nothing to touch him and he grabbed me around the neck."

Unlike most world leaders, Mr. Chretien often gets close to crowds, and has only a light security contingent with him.

The lack of security became clear last November when a knife-wielding man was arrested outside Mr. Chretien's bedroom at the official residence. The man said he was upset over a referendum in Quebec that came out against separation from the rest of Canada.

Police said he wandered around the premises for more than half an hour before being arrested. Mr. Chretien's wife Aline confronted him outside the bedroom and slammed the door on him.

Mr. Chretien stood with her behind the door with a piece of art ready to whack him on the head while waiting for police to show up.

Scalfaro dissolves parliament, Italy heads for early elections

ROME (AFP) — Italy braced for early elections Friday after President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro announced he was dissolving parliament, putting an end to weeks of political uncertainty.

Early elections have been virtually a foregone conclusion since Wednesday, when then Prime Minister

Designate Antonio Maccanico abandoned efforts to form Italy's 55th postwar government.

Government now remains in the hands of caretaker Premier Lamberto Dini.

The most likely date for the polls are either April 21 or 28, political sources said.

Mr. Scalfaro's office said he would meet the speakers of the two chambers of parliament, Irene Pivetti and Carlo Scognamiglio, later Friday to discuss Article 88 of the constitution that "enables the president to dissolve one or both chambers after consulting their speakers."

The president had been expected to make the announcement late Friday or Saturday, to cushion the impact on jittery financial markets, shaken by Mr. Maccanico's failure to form a government. Top industrialists have called for a speedy end to the uncertainty which is weighing on economic confidence.

The Milan Stock Index and the lira both retreated shortly after the announcement at 1200 GMT.

Italy has been floundering for a new government since Mr. Dini resigned on Jan. 11 when he failed to obtain sufficient backing from parliament to extend his tenure during Italy's six-month presidency of the EU.

Mr. Scalfaro led repeated rounds of talks with Italy's political parties in January to avoid early elections, fearing they could be disruptive at a crucial juncture for the EU, with a conference on revising the Maastricht Treaty due to be launched next month in Turin.

But Italy's political parties were unable to agree on what constitutional reforms the country needed to end its revolving-door governments. Debate centred on a proposal to set up a French-style presidential system, with a directly elected head of state, enjoying wide powers.

Shortly before Friday's announcement of an impending dissolution, Mr. Scalfaro agreed to a cabinet reshuffle at the request of Dini, who has been in charge of day-to-day business since his resignation.

The surprise mini-reshuffle, which named Vincenzo Cicalano as justice minister and Mario Arcelli as minister for the budget, signals that Mr. Scalfaro intends to ask Mr. Dini to head the government until polls are held.

This gives the government breathing space to concentrate on important EU business during its presidency, which expires on June 30.

Until now, Mr. Dini has been acting as prime minister, finance minister and minister of justice in the interim after the head of the latter portfolio, Filippo Mancuso, was censured by the parliament and forced to step down after a long-running battle with the anti-corruption judges of Milan.

Political parties, for their part, lost no time this week swinging into gear for elections, with both the centre-right and centre-left alliances closing ranks and putting out feelers for potential allies.

A poll published Thursday shows the three main parties — the Democratic Party of the Left, former Premier Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia and the National Alliance of Gianfranco Fini — more or less neck and neck.

The Datamedia Institute survey said the far-right National Alliance would slightly outpace Massimo D'Alema's left-wing party, with 21 per cent against 20.5 per cent.

The main centre-right and centre-left blocs were roughly on a par, with some 35 per cent of voters undecided.

The centre-left is hoping to secure the support of Mr. Dini, an economist who acquired a taste for politics when he was finance minister in Mr. Berlusconi's government in 1994 and as premier in 1995, backed by a centre-left majority.

Political sources expect Mr. Dini to enter the fray this time by forming a centrist movement allied with the left.

Fausto Bertinotti, secretary of the Refounded Communists, which accounts for about five per cent of voting intentions, has proposed an electoral alliance with the centre-left Olive Tree Alliance.

The federalist Northern League seems to be leaning towards an independent stance, refusing to join forces with either the right or the left.

Mr. Berlusconi, who is bogged down in a corruption trial, had hoped to avoid an electoral campaign this spring.

But, as the second hearing in a Milan court opened Friday, reports were rife that the trial could be postponed until after the elections.

New Zealand men too tough for their own good

WELLINGTON (R) — The tough exterior on which New Zealand men have prided themselves for generations has been shown to hurt their health, the Dominion newspaper reported Tuesday. Quoting a health authority study, the Wellington daily said staunch male attitudes were at the heart of why men's health and longevity are generally poorer than women's. It said the report found that masculinity was the main cause for men ignoring symptoms and trying to "tough it out." "It is easy to underestimate the power of this masculine outlook," the paper quoted the report as saying. "We may have an especially strong version of it in New Zealand, though it is an international phenomenon." As a result of the study, the paper said Auckland health officials want to change men's reluctance to get medical help by focusing on male ailments.

Almost half British male Jews marry non-Jews

LONDON (R) — Almost half of Britain's male Jews are marrying outside their community, according to a survey published on Thursday. Forty-four per cent of Jewish men under the age of 40 are married to or living with non-Jewish partners, the Institute for Jewish Policy Research said. The figure dropped to between 20 and 25 per cent for Jewish women. The institute, which questioned more than 2,000 adults in a survey that highlighted the growing divide between orthodox and secular Jews, also said one in three Jews in Britain choose not to belong to a synagogue. Anthony Lerman, the institute's executive director, said: "The survey is not all bleak. One of the things that is happening is that British Jews are coming together more like an ethnic community than a religious one." But a spokesman for Chief Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks said the survey "represents an enormous challenge to the community."

Schoolgirl suspended for French kiss

PARIS (R) — A French teenager who gave her boyfriend a steamy kiss outside the school gates was suspended for a day for indecent behaviour, the school said on Valentine's Day. "I didn't see it myself but I was told it was very long and passionate," said an official at the Watteau State High School in Valenciennes in northern France. The headmaster judged the kiss was so torrid it amounted to indecent behaviour. The girl, aged about 15, whose name was not disclosed, has returned to class after being ordered to stay home for a day last week to cool off.

Take That says will disband

MANCHESTER, England (AFP) — Teenagers across the land were thrown into disarray after the four remaining members of Britain's most idolised band, Take That, confirmed they were splitting up. The announcement at a press conference in Manchester followed a report in the Sun, which had been hastily denied by the band's record company RCA. It also comes after Take That singer Robbie Williams last July abandoned his fellow musicians to embark on a solo career. According to the Sun, the group's lead singer and composer Gary Barlow also wishes to begin a solo career, while the other three members Jason Orange, Howard Donald and Mark Owen want to give up show business.

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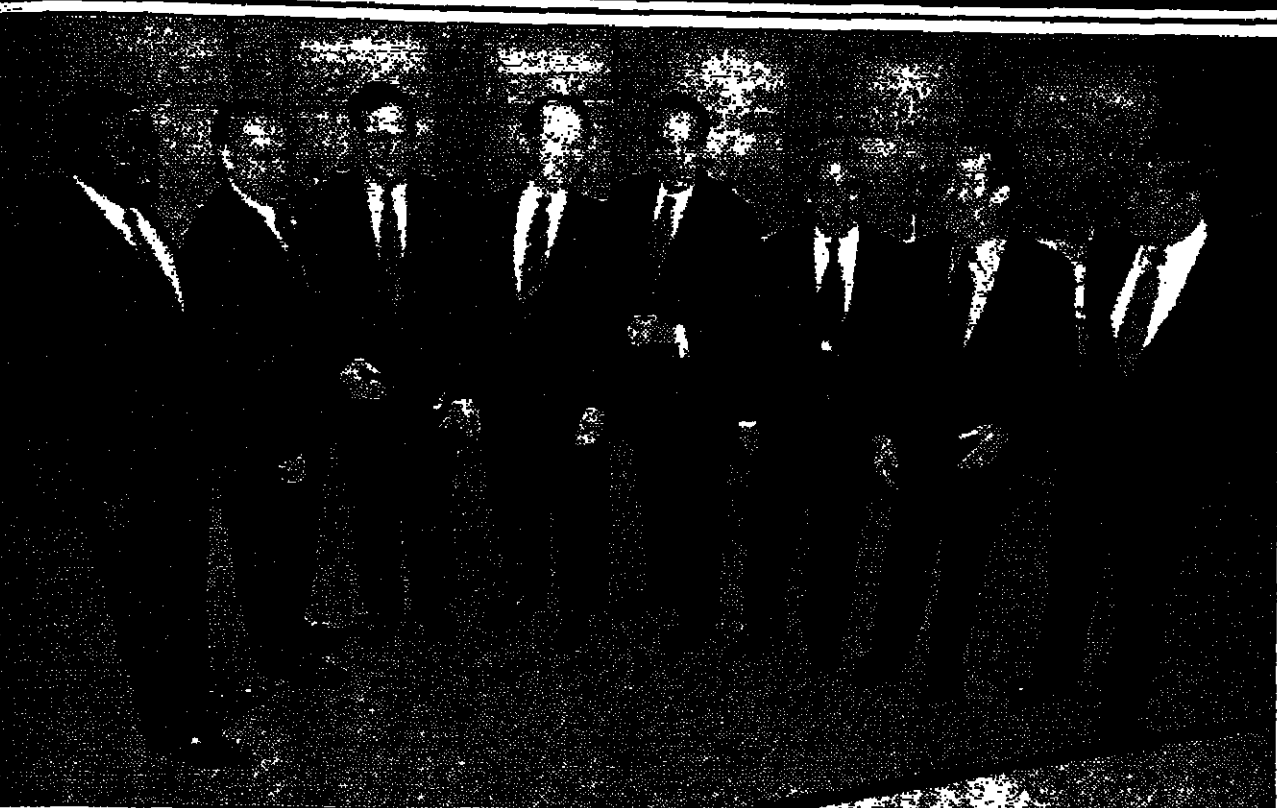
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Republican presidential candidates pose for a photo before a WMUR/CNN television debate in Manchester Thursday. From left are: Alan Keyes, Morry Taylor, Steve Forbes, Robert Dornan, Bob Dole, Richard Lugar, Lamar Alexander and Patrick Buchanan (Reuters photo)

Republicans blast each other in angry debate

MANCHESTER, N.H. (R) — Republican presidential challengers pounded frontrunner Bob Dole in a fiery debate Thursday that could be decisive in the close battle to win next week's vital New Hampshire primary.

But Sen. Dole fought back, blasting millionaire Steve Forbes for trying to buy the election, deriding Pat Buchanan for being an "isolationist" and accusing Lamar Alexander of being the first to use negative campaign commercials.

As the Republicans fought each other, their main target of the election campaign — President Bill Clinton — escaped with only a few glancing blows, mainly from Sen. Dole seeking to deflect the mounting attacks on himself.

"I've been shot at a lot tonight but I've been in combat before," said Sen. Dole, a World War II hero who lost the use of his right arm in battle.

There was no clear winner in one of the fiercest fights among Republicans in recent memory, according to a small group of undecided Republicans selected for comment by CNN, which broadcast the debate.

"What you are seeing now is a family fight," said George Bush's former White House Chief of Staff John Sununu.

In the group of 36 voters selected by CNN, men seemed to favour Mr. Buchanan while women leaned more to Sen. Dole. Asked who they thought won the debate, 17 said nobody did while 13 leaned toward Mr. Alexander. The other six had no opinion.

Sen. Dole was not the only Republican who came under fire. Mr. Forbes, who spent millions of his inherited wealth on negative advertising in the Iowa caucuses, blasted Mr. Alexander for engaging in what he called "various scams" to become a millionaire-while governor.

He was referring to press reports that Mr. Alexander had turned a \$1.5 investment in a Tennessee newspaper into a \$600,000 profit. Mr. Alexander rebutted Mr. Forbes by saying the only reason this was coming up was that he had released his tax returns, something the publishing fortune heir refused to do.

Sen. Dole also attacked Mr. Forbes, saying, "I know what your problem is. You've got a lot of money and you want to buy this election. This election is not for sale." Sen. Dole blamed Mr. Forbes' attack advertisements on his drop in the



Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia casts her ballot in the country's general elections Thursday in Dhaka. Mrs. Khaleda pushed through with her plans for the election despite a boycott by all main opposition parties (Reuters photo)

Bangladesh's BNP set for landslide win

DHAKA (R) — The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) won its expected easy victory Friday in general elections, but the boycotting opposition dismissed the vote as rigged and meaningless.

Partial results announced by mid-afternoon Friday said the BNP of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had won 162 out of 300 parliament seats and only one seat had gone to an independent candidate.

Opposition parties that shunned Thursday's election alleged the voting was

polls.

The Senate majority leader said if Mr. Forbes were to run more commercials attacking him, he should use better pictures. Then he walked over toward him and gave him photos of himself, his wife and his dog "Leader."

It was one of the few light moments in a tense night. Sen. Dole was hit by an outraged Buchanan for calling him an extremist in negative commercials and for backing free trade agreements that hurt U.S. workers.

"Bob it is not true. Pat Buchanan is not an extremist. Those are the cuss words of the establishment." He joined Mr. Alexander in saying Sen. Dole should rise above his campaign advertisements.

Longshot Bob Dornan, a rightwing California congressman, urged the group to stop fighting. "I have a solution. Every word in our ads should be spoken by ourselves. That way my friend Bob can't get someone to call Pat an extremist."

He also fruitlessly urged his colleagues to abide by former Republican President Ronald Reagan's "11th commandment" — no Republican should criticise another.

"Let's unify," he said.

Mr. Buchanan, who has vigorously opposed international trade agreements, hit Sen. Dole particularly for his backing of the North American Free Trade Agreement, opening up trade borders with Mexico as well as Canada.

"I'm sure NAFTA was a wonderful deal for America," Mr. Buchanan said with sarcasm.

"Two years after we negotiated and signed it, our trade surplus is gone. We've got a \$15 billion deficit with Mexico, 300,000 jobs have gone south, the Florida winter tomato industry is on its back," he said, adding:

"Illegal immigration is soaring into this country. Mexico is the prime source of narcotics and drugs and my good friend, Senator Dole, negotiated a \$50 billion bailout with Bill Clinton with the regime that brought this all about."

Sen. Dole counterpunched, accusing Mr. Buchanan of being a protectionist. "Pat's off on this isolationist kick — build a wall around America," he said. "What's the matter, Pat, did you have a bad day?"

Australia's ruling party feels power drain away

CANBERRA (R) — Australia's ruling Labour Party, facing an uphill battle to win the March 2 general election, felt its political dominance slip further Friday when it lost office in the northern state of Queensland.

Queensland Premier Wayne Goss said his Labour government would hand over power to the National Party Tuesday after losing a crucial by-election, leaving Labour still in power nationally but only in control of one state.

And opinion polls show Labour's 13-year-old government in Canberra has failed to budge the conservative opposition's nine-point lead and may be heading for defeat in the election two weeks away.

In 1989, Labour ruled the Nationality and in five of the six states.

Prime Minister Paul Keating's campaign for a record sixth consecutive National win for Labour suffered a fresh setback Friday with a new poll of marginal seats in the key states of New South Wales and Queensland showing it well behind.

The opposition coalition of Liberal and National parties needs only a 0.5 per cent point national swing to pick up the seven seats it needs to oust Labour.

Mr. Keating and his senior economic ministers Friday seized on an opposition plan to slash government spending by 6.3 billion Australian dollar (\$4.7 billion) in its first term in power to portray the conservatives as irresponsible.

Australia's powerful welfare lobby also condemned the spending cuts, warning they would force many migrants and the jobless onto the streets.

"They are taking money from people most in need in our community, people on the lowest incomes," said Michael Raper, deputy leader of the Australian Council of Social Services.

"It's going to throw them at the Mercy of Charity (groups), on the streets or their families."

In Queensland, an emotional Goss said he would quit as Labour leader to allow the party to rebuild after a dramatic change in its political fortunes in the state.

Goss, once one of the country's most popular politicians, was returned with a one-seat majority in a state election in July.

But the party lost a new election ordered for one seat where electoral officials ruled there had been irregularities.

"When I consider the task of building a new parliamentary image and sense of purpose, and the need for unity, I know from my own experience...that it demands a fresh start," Goss said.

"After eight years as parliamentary leader I must question whether I am the right person to undertake the task, especially given my close association with the July result and subsequent events," he said.

Meanwhile Australia's 22nd, and possibly last governor-general, was sworn in Friday amid uncertainty over the country's future links with the British throne.

Sir William Deane, 65, a former judge of Australia's High Court, succeeds Bill Hayden who has retired after serving as the British monarchy's representative for seven years.

Chinese invasion of Taiwan doomed, says top U.S. general

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States' top General John Shalikashvili said that China, despite its massive military might, would fail if it tried to invade Taiwan.

China is massing troops in the coastal region across a narrow strait from Taiwan, ahead of presidential elections in March on the island claimed by Beijing.

But the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said he believed a Chinese invasion would falter because its outdated navy would fail to rise to the occasion.

He estimated that a Chinese amphibious assault could land only some 30,000 soldiers on Taiwan, too few for victory.

"We do not believe that they have the capability to conduct amphibious operations of the nature that would be necessary to invade Taiwan," Gen. Shalikashvili told defence reporters here Thursday.

He said U.S. forces were carefully watching the military build-up on the mainland coast nearest the Strait of Taiwan, noting that troop movements appeared to be geared toward military exercises and not attacking Taiwan.

Taiwanese authorities have said China is massing 150,000 men in Fujian for joint air force, navy and army drills, which will likely be based on a Chinese island just 60 nautical miles from a Taiwanese outpost.

High-ranking Taiwanese military officers said that if the military exercise should turn into an invasion, Taiwan would mobilise warplanes to bomb mainland military targets.

Beijing has viewed Taiwan as a renegade province since the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949. It accuses President Lee Teng-Hui of wanting independence and has vowed to attack Taiwan if it formally breaks from the mainland.

Tension between Beijing and Taipei has escalated since President Lee's unofficial trip to the United States last June. The infuriated Chinese government suspended high-level talks with Taiwan and conducted two rounds of missile drills and a large-scale exercise off Taiwan.

Taiwan's first direct democratic elections for the presidency are due to take place on March 23. China fears they could be a prelude to independence moves.

Analysis mainly agree with the Gulf War hero's vision despite China's massive superiority in men and machines.

China has 1.2 billion people to Taiwan's 21 million and is nearly the size of the United States compared to Taiwan's 14,000 square miles.

China has a 2.9 million-strong military, compared to Taiwan's 289,000 and vastly outnumbers the island in firepower and hardware with 12 combat aircraft for every Taiwanese plane and 52 submarines to Taiwan's four.

But military experts rate Taiwan's defence preparations highly and are unimpressed by China's fighting machine.

"There's no way with their present capability, even if they mobilise far more than now, to take Taiwan very quickly," said Gerald Segal, a China analyst at London's International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS).

"That's a massive operation. It would make a mess of Taiwan. It is not clear it could succeed. With minimal American action, it could be stopped," Mr. Segal added.

Former U.S. Assistant Defense Secretary Chas Freeman believes neither Taiwan nor China want a war in the Taiwan Strait, but tensions between them could escalate into combat soon after Taiwan's election March 23.

"Taiwan's miscalculation, China's emotional reactions and the United States' inattention have created tensions that could escalate into combat soon after Taiwan's election," Mr. Freeman wrote in an editorial published Thursday in the New York Times.

The New York Times reported last month that Chinese officials told Mr. Freeman they had a plan to launch a missile attack per day for 30 days against Taiwan after the election. Whether they carried out the plan would depend on Taiwan's behavior after the elections, they said.

If war broke out China would eventually prevail, but Beijing would reckon without intervention by the United States and other allies.

Official U.S. policy holds that any effort to determine Taiwan's future by force would be "of grave concern to the United States," suggesting that Washington would be prepared to defend Taiwan even though it is under no obligation to do so.

Mr. Freeman quoted a Chinese official as saying they did not fear U.S. retaliation because U.S. leaders "care more about Los Angeles than they do about Taiwan."

Body found in collapsed Japanese tunnel

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese rescue workers digging into a collapsed tunnel in northern Japan have found the body of a man in a car crushed by a slab of concrete, police said late Friday.

The rescuers were still trying to reach a bus and the 19 people it was believed to be carrying, almost a week after a rockfall sealed the tunnel on the northern island of Hokkaido.

It was the first discovery of a victim of the accident since the rescue operation started last Saturday.

The body was believed to be that of Tatsushi Umemoto, a 20-year-old fishing industry employee, who was known to be driving a car caught in the major landslide.

Rescuers said they would continue working through the night Friday.

But hopes of finding the 19 others are now negligible as rescuers do not expect to get to the bus until Saturday, as freezing weather conditions worsened around the snow-covered site.

"We found the body of a man who was bending down on the driving seat," a police official said. "Now we are trying to confirm the identification of the body." His death was due to pressure, doctors were quoted by the police as saying.

The wine-red coloured four-wheel-drive vehicle was completely crushed, with part of the body visible between debris and the huge concrete.

Five large boulders have buried the bus and car in a 40-metre stretch of the 1,086-metre tunnel between the towns of Yoichi and Furubira.

"We removed about half the rocks and soil," said an official of the Hokkaido Development Bureau, which has been leading the rescue effort.

Although part of the bus has been spotted, rescuers remained cautious about starting to dig further due to unstable rock and concrete sitting atop the bus, officials said.

South Korea prepares for possible crisis in North

SEOUL (Agencies) — South Korea is taking steps to prepare for a possible crisis in North Korea because of growing instability in the Stalinist country, Seoul officials said Friday.

Kim Kyung-Woong, spokesman for the National Unification Ministry, said Seoul's top security policymakers met Thursday to discuss continuing uncertainty in North Korea.

"We don't expect North Korea to collapse soon and we are not working out a plan on the assumption of an imminent collapse but we believe we should be fully prepared for any circumstances," Mr. Kim told reporters.

Prime Minister Lee Soo-Sung presided over the Thursday meeting, which was also attended by National Unification Minister Kwon O-Kie, Foreign Minister Gong Ro-Myoung, Defence Minister Lee Yang-Ho and top presidential secretaries.

The top officials decided that various government agencies should coordinate to speed up the processing of further defections by North Koreans and help them settle in the South.

"If a large group of North Koreans defect to South Korea, we should be prepared," the spokesman said.

Policymakers agreed that "factors of instability and social deviation" had increased in North Korea, as shown in a growth in the number of its citizens fleeing, Mr. Kim said.

Seoul says about 200 North Koreans have defected to South Korea in the past two years.

In the latest of a wave of defection bids, a North Korean sergeant killed three guards to force his way into the Russian embassy compound in Pyongyang Wednesday.

The sergeant, from the State Security Guard, demanded political asylum but later killed himself with a pistol at the Russian trade mission, which is within walking distance of North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il's office, Russia's ITAR-TASS news agency said.

Earlier this week, South Korean officials said Sung Hye-Rim, the first wife of Kim Jong-Il, was in hiding in a Western country and seeking to defect to South Korea.

The Unification Ministry spokesman confirmed Ms. Sung and three other North Korean women accompanying her had fled the North and were in a European country.

But he could not confirm if Ms. Sung's group was seeking asylum in South Korea.

"Our government is making diplomatic efforts to make sure they are safe but we are not directly involved in protecting them," spokesman Mr. Kim added.

He said South Korean policymakers agreed the military has become increasingly vocal in North Korea, where the formal transfer of power has been delayed since the death of President Kim Il-Sung in July 1994.

Kim Jong-Il, the eldest son and political heir to the late president, is head of the military but has not taken over the two key posts his father had held — general secretary of the Communist Party and state president.

Meanwhile Mr. Kim Jong-Il celebrated his 54th birthday Friday amid signs that an irreversible internal collapse has begun, but no outsiders can say how serious Mr. Kim's position is.

In Pyongyang, Kim Jong-Il was showered with praise at a ceremony Thursday evening in a 6,000-seater hall filled with the portraits of him and his father.

According to the North Korean news agency KCNA, Choe Thae Bok, alternate politburo member of the Korean Worker's Party, saw in Mr. Kim

Jong-Il "the master of leadership and the genius of creation and construction who has such perfect and seasoned leadership ability, ever-victorious brilliant tactics, matchless revolutionary sweeps as Comrade Kim Il-Sung."

"North Korea has entered a process of internal decay and self-destruction. It seems that we see the beginning of the end," said Tomoyuki Kojima, a researcher at the privately-owned Japan Forum on International Relations.

"The floods last summer have caused great damage. But the real crisis is not this one. It is rather the one of the system itself which is at a dead-end," added Mr. Kojima, who is also a professor at Keio University.

For Mr. Kojima, one of the main reasons for the crisis is the absence of political legitimacy for Kim Jong-Il. "He owes his position entirely to his late father Kim Il-Sung."

Spain moves against ETA backers as campaign opens

MADRID (R) — As campaigning began Friday for an election it is set to lose, Spain's Socialist government reacted to public outrage against Basque ETA rebels by announcing it would bring charges against their political wing.

"I think there are legal grounds to act (against ETA political wing Herri Batasuna)...even on the basis of collaboration with terrorism," Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez told state television late Thursday.

He was speaking minutes before the start at midnight of the official campaign for elections on March 3 which polls predict will deliver a conservative Popular Party (PP) government after 13 years of Socialist rule.

His announcement followed Wednesday's murder by ETA of Francisco Tomas Y Valiente, a widely respected law professor who served for six years as head of Spain's Constitutional Court.

The killing, the second in less than two weeks, sparked widespread public anger and thousands of students and citizens paused in silent protest Thursday as the murdered professor was buried with Mr. Gonzalez and cabinet ministers in attendance.

State radio said the leaders of Herri Batasuna would be charged with making a public apology for violence and abetting an armed group. Evidence against them will include a videotape the group has been playing in basque bars, clubs and schools in recent days and in which hooded, armed rebels plead their case.

ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom) has killed some 800 people in a drive for independence launched in 1968.

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GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 684311, 699634
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 696183

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Accord not a 'breakthrough'

THE APPARENT "breakthrough" struck in Oslo a few days ago between Jordan, Israel and the Palestinians on how to divide their water resources was only an agreement in principle on water sharing. As long as all the fine details of the "agreement in principle" have yet to be worked out and agreed upon, the initial accord between the three parties can at best be the starting point for the resolution of one of the most formidable problems facing the countries of the region. Against this backdrop, it is still too early to hail the Oslo meeting of minds between the three sides as the real "breakthrough" on the way to solving the grave water crisis in the area.

Unfortunately there has been very little said or disclosed about even the principles agreed upon between the parties. It is one thing to agree in principle on the equitable distribution of scarce water resources and quite another to pin down in greater details what each side would be entitled to do under the preliminary deal.

At any rate, a major shortcoming of the Oslo "understanding" is the absence of Syria and Lebanon from it. On the one hand, Syria happens to hold the key for much of the water resources in the Middle East and without its full participation and blessing, there can be no real and permanent formula for equitable water sharing. The Golan Heights which are still under Israeli occupation hold many vital important water tributaries that replenish the water basin flanking Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian self-rule area. Jordan in particular is heavily dependent on a solid agreement with Syria to satisfy its water needs since the Yarmouk River water originates up north.

On the other hand, Lebanon is also a key partner in the final solution of the region's water problems since its rivers continue to pour into the Israeli Galilee region without Beirut having any say about the flow. Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon has more than security considerations in mind. Southern Lebanon is where the flow of water into the area especially Israel is controlled. Without these two Arab states joining the multilateral talks on water, there can be no final and durable solution to the problem.

On top of these two important hurdles, there remains the elusive agreement between Turkey, Syria and Iraq over the Euphrates River. Ankara has been busy building a series of big dams in its southeastern region to contain huge amounts of water for the reconstruction of that economically depressed area. This added Turkish use of water that originates in its territory has ended up depleting considerably the river flow into Syria and then into Iraq igniting a crisis between Turkey and its two Arab neighbouring states. Once the full dimension and implications of these complicating factors are better understood and appreciated, the Oslo agreement would be very limited in scope indeed, awaiting, as it will, the resolution of the even more difficult water disputes.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER FOR Al Ra'i described as futile the Arab-Israeli meetings over the return of the Palestinians displaced by the 1967 war and said that Israel has no right to prevent the Arabs from returning to their homeland in the peace era. Mahmoud Rimawi referred in particular to the sixth Arab-Israeli meetings to decide on who is a displaced Palestinian and who has the right to return home and said that Israel has suggested the return of 200,000 to their homeland in 50 years, something which contradicts the spirit of peace and is totally unacceptable to the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular. The Palestinians have the right to return under international laws and norms and the U.N. Charter and U.N. resolutions, and Israel has no right to stop them, said the writer. What the Arabs are rightly demanding is the return of the displaced Palestinians to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip over which Israel has no sovereignty and therefore the Jewish state has no right to interfere in other countries' affairs, stressed the writer. Furthermore, Israel has no right to fixing the number of displaced Palestinians who are entitled to return 200,000 at a time when the United Nations insists that their number is over 350,000, he added. The writer said that by denying the Palestinians the right to return Israel is dashing the aspirations of all people in the region of enjoying stability and progress.

A WRITER FOR Al Dostour lauded the efforts of the Jordanian industrialists and business community for maintaining strong trade and economic ties with Iraq. Jordan is close to Iraq and the Iraqi people and has real economic interests with them and therefore it is only logical that Jordanians strive to protect these interests, said Taher Adwan. The writer said that Jordan depends on Iraq for most of its exports and the Jordanian industry is linked to the Iraqi markets, hence the keenness of the industrialists to seek to protect this close relationship and the national interests, added the writer.

Jordanian Perspective

King's visits to the region mark the birth of a new inter-Arab relationship

Dr. Musa Keilani

His Majesty the King's two visits to Egypt and Saudi Arabia earlier this week do not fall within the context of "reconciliation" as some analysts tried to indicate. The two visits signify the new concept of "partnership" in redrawing the map for the Middle East with Iraq and Palestine taking the proper priority.

The reconciliation stage is "passé" and has born excellent fruits through the quiet diplomacy of American mediators since 1991 when Jordan attended the Madrid peace conference and gave all support to international efforts to trade land for peace and security. Moreover, Sharif Ben Shaker and Abdul Karim Kabariti had both enjoyed a prominent role in making the proper semi-secret contacts with the Saudi and Egyptian decision makers months ago. Those contacts translated themselves into tangible results when President Mubarak showed up in Aqaba more than once within the last few years which witnessed five meetings between the two heads of state.

Jordan had managed to break out of its isolation within the Arab World when all parties to the second Gulf war became convinced that they misunderstood then Jordan's adoption of an Arab solution to end the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Had that position been adopted, a lot of bloodshed and financial waste would have been avoided. The six trillions dollars could have been better used in building a new infrastructure for development and modernisation in this region which has a big potential of being an Eden.

with its rivers, minerals, climate and population.

Arab heads of state found out, though belatedly, that Jordan was not an accomplice to Saddam Hussein since it refused to be an accomplice to Schwarzkopf.

The King's visit to Saudi Arabia and Egypt underlines the birth of a new inter-Arab relationship. It is no longer the Gulf donor countries versus the confrontation-receiver countries with financial subsidies forming the life-line of such a relationship. Geography and demography no longer play the only decisive role in inter-regional politics. Since Madrid, in 1991, a new factor emerged which gives the proper dues to the intrinsic qualitative stands of each country, whether small or large. This new criterion gave Jordan its qualitative weight as a moderate, feasible, creative contributor to the region's prosperity, peace and security.

The real facts of political life in the new world order do not attribute a qualitative weight to merely demographic consideration of billions of hard currency reserves in Swiss banks. The only criterion is the resolve and determination of a charismatic leadership to identify with the aspiration of its people, to be one of the pioneers in restructuring Arab World along the lines dictated by the requirements of the twenty first century.

It is no longer a new page to be opened in Egyptian-Jordanian relationship.

That new page has been actually opened when all recon-

ciliation efforts took place sometime ago with the joint ventures established regarding trade protocols, investments in the Red Sea littoral states, transport of natural liquefied gas from Egypt to Jordan and Israel and many other fields of cooperation.

The question of Iraq remains the common denominator among the Royal visits to Morocco, Mecca and Cairo.

A consensus of Arab opinion is required now before any action is taken to "alleviate the sufferings of the Iraqi people."

That explains the Moroccan monarch's visit to Saudi Arabia only days after discussing the Iraqi file with prince Al Hassan. Moreover, the Kuwaiti prime minister met with the strongest man in the Iraqi opposition, Ayatollah Bager Al Hakeem, and sent the same day a letter to Amman. Moreover, the security aspect of the Iraqi file were discussed in Cairo during this Royal visit with the hope to iron out the differences between King Hussein and Mubarak regarding "legitimate means" to end "the sufferings in Baghdad."

In conclusion we can safely say that the King's visit to Mecca was a success irrespective whether King Fahed was briefed or not. The top five Saudi decision-makers were all attentive to Jordan's analysis of current events in Iraq and the region. The same can be said about the talks between his majesty and Mubarak. All signals are indicative of big steps in re-structuring the region.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

King Hussein — catalyst for Arab reconciliation

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

IN THE past week the local Arabic dailies gave prominence to His Majesty King Hussein's visits to Saudi Arabia and Egypt, developments in Israel and the Palestinian lands, the tasks of the new government in Jordan, domestic and pan-Arab affairs.

Al Ra'i daily hailed the King's visit to Egypt and his talks with President Hosni Mubarak on reestablishing solidarity among Arab states as marking a new era in the region's history. In their joint press conference, at the end of the talks, the King and the Egyptian president reaffirmed their determination to work together for a common cause, for supporting the Palestinians to regain their full rights and the Iraqi people end their sufferings, said the daily.

Such a position, said the paper, paves the ground for genuine solidarity among the Arab leaders to work for the benefit of their people.

It was Jordan which played a leading role in 1984 to bring back Egypt to the Arab fold after it had concluded its peace treaty with Israel and was isolated from the rest of the Arab World, recalled Sultan Al Hattab, a writer for Al Ra'i daily.

King Hussein, who spearheaded efforts to end Egypt's isolation, is again working relentlessly to rally the Arab countries and end their divisions and differences caused by the Gulf crisis, said the writer.

In his talks in Cairo and Saudi Arabia, he added, King Hussein exerted fresh efforts to stimulate joint Arab action, end the sufferings of the Iraqi people, back the Palestinian people's efforts to regain all their rights and give momentum to the peace process.

A writer for Al Dostour said that King Hussein's visit to Saudi Arabia has restored the warmth between the leaderships in the two countries following a period of cool relations resulting from the Gulf crisis.

Jihad Jibara said that Jordan and Saudi Arabia have maintained strong ties throughout the past decades, at the political, social and economic levels, and the people and leaderships of both

countries would never allow side issues to mar the historic ties between them nor permit the differences in views to freeze cooperation in all fields.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a writer for Al Ra'i, said that King Hussein's visits brought hope to Arab masses that the Arab countries are once again on the right track towards reconciliation.

Describing the current developments and contacts among Arab regimes as very positive, the writer said that Jordan has succeeded in paving the ground for the restoration of strong ties with Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, a move that augurs well for the future of the Arab countries and one that is bound to reestablish balance in inter-Arab relations.

"Jordan has succeeded in paving the ground for the restoration of strong ties with Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, a move that augurs well for the future of the Arab countries and one that is bound to reestablish balance in inter-Arab relations."

Mohammad Kawash, a writer for Al Dostour, expressed the view that Israel is far from leaning towards a just peace with its Arab neighbours, citing the statements of the leaders of the ruling Labour Party and the opposition Likud bloc.

While the Likud leaders have made it clear that they are against pulling out from the Golan Heights, against ceding Arab Jerusalem, and against ending the Jewish settlements, the Labour Party leaders said the withdrawal from the Golan will be subject to a referendum, that Israel holds on to the unity of Jerusalem under its control and will not terminate the settlements, the writer pointed out.

He said that in light of these positions, one can conclude that the Israeli leaders are moving away from a real and lasting peace.

Israhim Absi, a writer for Al Ra'i, urged the Israeli forces that support peace with the Arabs to stand firm in the face of the Likud leaders who are launching a campaign against the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Syrian heights.

The writer said that if Israel wants to build

bridges of peace and ensure stability in the region, they have no alternative to giving up occupied Arab lands in Palestine, Lebanon and Syria.

The voters in the coming Israeli elections, added the writer, should express their total opposition to the Likud ideas and should back candidates who work for a lasting and comprehensive peace which is sought by "the various parties in the region."

While the Likud Party and the Tsomet movement have signed a document to work together in the coming Israeli elections and oppose the return of Arab lands, the Arab parties in Israel seem to be in disarray and not be able to agree on a united stand in the coming elections to help secure a genuine

peace based on justice, said Nawaf Zaru, a writer for Al Dostour. The writer said that it is in the interest of the main Israeli parties to preserve the differences among the Arab parties, though both the Likud and Labour party are striving to win the favour of the Arab voters in the elections.

He said that the Arab votes are to be counted for in the coming battle for the Knesset seats and there is urgent need for the Arab voters to seek unity in order to win seats and also support Israeli parties which work for peace.

The government of Abdul Karim Kabariti is confronting a huge task at the domestic level, but the question is where to start in making reforms and handling the chronic issues, said Mohammad Subeih for Al Dostour.

The writer said one important element for success is ensuring the collaboration of the ministers who should work in unison and display cohesion.

The government should identify the areas which require reform and work as a team to make it happen, suggested the writer.

He said that the government would act wisely if it sought the assistance of

political parties, academics, former senior officials and other sectors who can help it draw up a programme for the aspired reform.

Hussein Abu Rumman, a writer for Al Ra'i, said one must refrain from expressing excessive optimism about the expected achievements of the new government.

No one can expect miracles and it is known that the government is shouldering huge tasks and has a limited time to carry out reforms, said the writer.

It is true that the King's letter of appointment to the government gave it the green light to embark on reform and the white revolution, said the writer, but the responsibilities facing the Cabinet are so heavy and not easy to handle.

The writer said that the government at least has a good chance to launch a reform programme whose momentum could be maintained by succeeding governments.

Mohammad Daoud, a writer for Al Dostour, praised the Ministry of Interior for creating special commissions that will deal with any excesses and violations or shortcomings in public administration.

The commissions, which will supervise government businesses to prevent imbalances and negligence, are also open to receive public grievances, said the writer.

He said it is hoped that other ministries will follow this example and so embody the meaning and objectives of reform.

A writer for Al Dostour discussed the ongoing bloodshed in Algeria, caused by car bomb attacks on residential areas that cause the death of innocent people.

While condemning such acts as crimes against humanity, one wonders what would the perpetrators gain except the hatred of society, said Taher Adwan.

These crimes have nothing to do with politics and religion and they must be stopped because they are continually draining the human and material resources of the country, he said.

The writer added that extremism and terrorism can by no means help any group win the people's support or confidence.

Ireland, mythology and the IRA

By Gwynne Dyer

THE IRONY is that if it weren't for the Irish Republican Army (IRA), Ireland would be effectively united by now. But one still cannot help feeling sorry for poor old Gerry Adams.

Being the spokesman for the Sinn Fein, the IRA's political front, is always a thankless job for some of the people Adams represents are fanatics he cannot control. But calling the White House to tell President Bill Clinton that the 17-month ceasefire in Northern Ireland was over — just minutes before a massive IRA bomb exploded in London — must have made Adams wonder about job openings in some less demanding area of public relations.

Early indications are that the IRA broke the ceasefire because it was on the brink of splitting internally. The "hard men" who were talked into declaring a unilateral ceasefire in late 1994 had lost faith in their colleagues' promises that this tactic would finally bring the organisation recognition as an equal negotiating partner in Irish affairs.

Faced with a choice between internal division and renewed war, the IRA followed its instincts and went back to bombs. It has lost much of its remaining popular support by breaking the peace, but it still has enough dedicated "soldiers" to operate at a low level both in England and in Northern Ireland for many years to come.

What it cannot do is escape the basic paradox of its existence. It is an organisation consecrated to the cause of a united Ireland — and it has become the greatest obstacle to the realisation of that goal.

Imagine for a moment that the IRA had not exploited the civil rights struggle of the late 1960s in Northern Ireland to relaunch an armed struggle against "British occupation."

The mistreatment of the Catholic minority in the North by the Protestant majority would have ended even more quickly if the Protestants did not wrap themselves in the British flag. And in 1973, both the United Kingdom and Ireland joined the Common Market (now the European Union).

If there had been no war in Northern Ireland, by now there would have been 23 years of completely open borders between the Irish Republic and the North. Hundreds of thousands of people would have moved from the Republic to the North and vice versa. All kinds of joint business ventures would have sprung up, and the old tribal mistrust between Catholics and Protestants would have been greatly eroded.

There might still be a sign marking the border on the road between Dublin and Belfast, but there would be no checkpoints, no delays, and little sense that there are two separate countries on the island of Ireland. It would, in fact, be little different from crossing the border between England and Wales.

Thanks to the IRA, things are a bit different. Over 3,000 people are dead, and the inter-Irish border is one of the most heavily guarded in Europe. Mistrust between the two communities in Northern Ireland has never been greater, and the Protestant majority in the North still believes (falsely) that the Irish Republic is a monolithic Catholic juggernaut that would crush them if they abandoned their British ties.

One couldn't have done a more effective job of sabotaging Irish unity if one wanted to. So why does the IRA persist in such a spectacularly unsuccessful strategy?

Seventy-five years ago the Irish poet W.B. Yeats, writing about the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916, penned the lines that have cursed Ireland ever since:

"I write it out in a verse —
MacDonagh and McBride
And Connolly and Pearse
Now and in time to be,
Wherever green is worn,
Are changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born."

MacDonagh and MacBride and Connolly and Pearse were among the couple of hundred Irish nationalists who seized several central Dublin buildings during the World War I, hoping all of Ireland would follow them in revolt against British rule. But they died under British cannon fire or were hanged afterwards, and there was no mass uprising.

What happened, instead, is that the "gunman" was canonised in Irish literature and mythology as the epitome of romantic nationalism. "A terrible beauty is born," said Yeats, but the aftermath was much more terrible than beautiful.

By 1921 the parts of Ireland with a Catholic majority had won independence by Britain. But the gunmen of the IRA then fought a two-year civil war against their own government for making a deal that did not force London to compel the Protestants of the North to accept Dublin's rule too.

The IRA has been illegal in the Irish Republic ever since, but the myth of the gunman still has a powerful grip on many Irish minds. In the North, where the Catholic minority had no prospect of ever winning its goal of unification with the Catholic south by democratic means, its appeal was particularly seductive. But the results have been — well, terrible.

After 25 years of armed struggle, the IRA seemed to reach that conclusion itself in 1994. It was being contained at a cost in money and lives that Britain could easily go on paying forever, and there was no reason to believe that would change. So a unilateral ceasefire at least offered it some political credit.

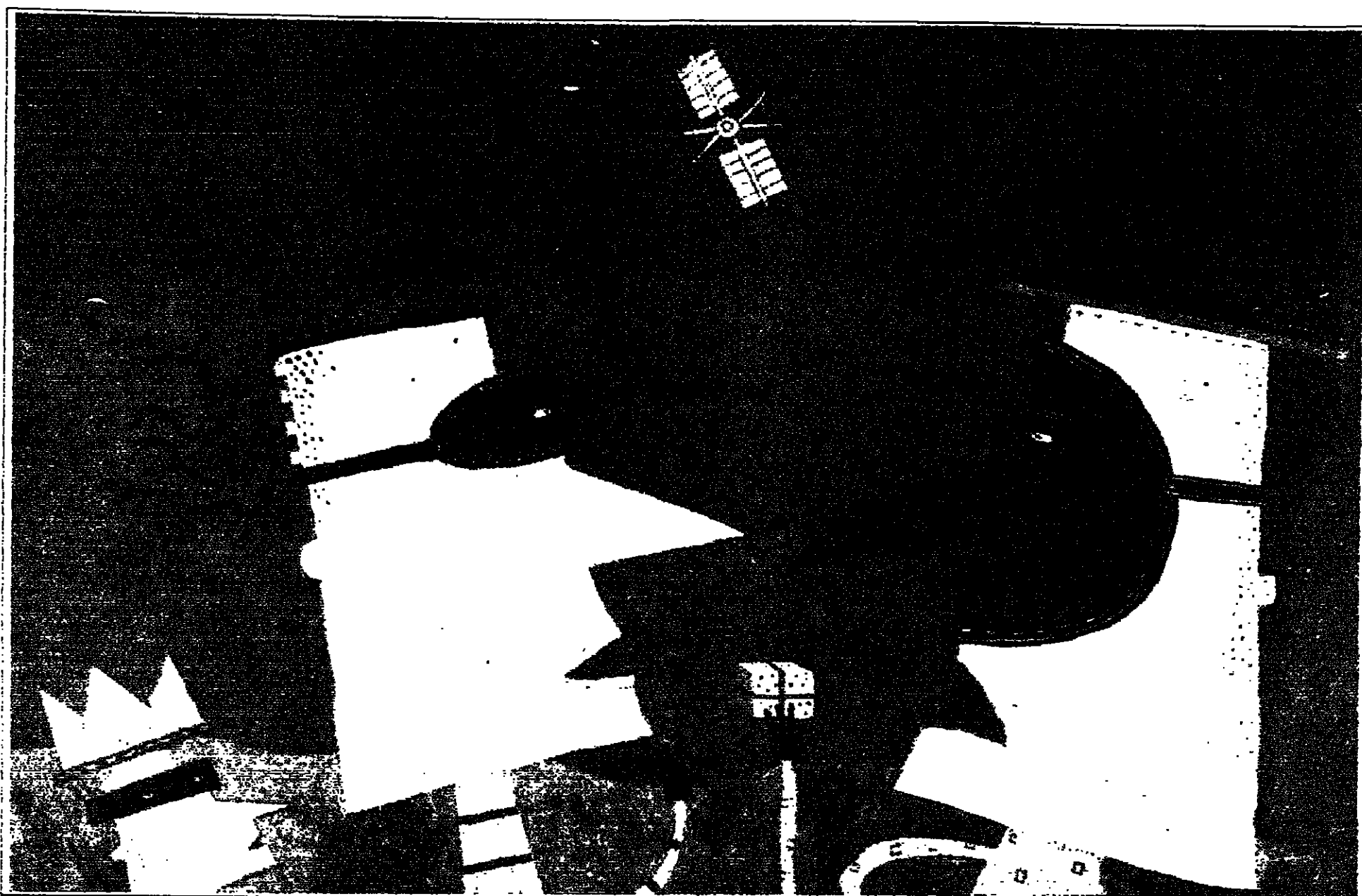
Those brought up in the mythology of the gunman despise such crass political calculations, and for the moment they have won over their IRA colleagues. But the new violence may not last very long, and it certainly isn't going to get them anywhere.

English like she is spoke — an abuser's guide

By Sidney Greenbaum

TAKE A million words of English, comprising 500 texts of around 2,000 words each, all uttered - in speech or writing - by educated native speakers. And another three million or so words from the Wall Street Journal, then churn them all through a computer program to analyse linguistic structure and to tag each word with one of 170 different indicators of its possible grammatical role. Next check by hand every one of the computer's attributions. You will then be in a position to start thinking about writing a descriptive grammar of the English language and, if you are as thorough and meticulous as Professor Sidney Greenbaum, you will have finished some 650 pages later.

"It was originally commissioned as a 350-page book", Mr. Greenbaum explained, "and I would have been happy to cut it down to that size, but OUP decided to keep it at the length it was written." The final product, the Oxford English Grammar (E25), is undoubtedly a landmark in linguistic publishing and an imposing monument to scholarship. Never before has our language been given such a thorough overhaul; never has there been, in a single volume, so complete an account of the structure of English as it is used by all of us. Yet despite - or perhaps because of - its thoroughness, the Oxford English Grammar is a curiously unsatisfying and even unsettling work. For this is very much an account of English like she is spoke rather than English as she should be spoken. It is, as Prof. Greenbaum explained to me: "A descriptive book on the contemporary English language, restricted largely to British and American English with some reference to non-standard differences and with a reference to historical antecedents." He talks a good deal like that. Long, clear sentences, slightly cumbersome, pausing, in the style of all the best academics and politicians, only at moments when it is most difficult for one to interrupt. Oh dear. Shouldn't that last sentence have had a verb in it somewhere? If you want advice on that sort of thing, the OEG is not the



place to look. It will tell you that such a sentence is an example of ellipsis: "He talks in long, clear sentences..." but, adopting the strictly non-interventionist approach of a modern descriptive grammar, this book does not set out to be a guide on whether to ellipsis or not to ellipsis. (Ellipsis, incidentally, is a word invented by Professor Greenbaum which he hopes will find its way into dictionaries soon.)

So if this Grammar does not tell us whether prepositions may be used to end sentences with, or when to acceptably split infinitives, who (or whom) is it aimed at? "It is written for the generally educated public," the professor maintains. Ah yes, but there is educated and educated: the "educated" potential reader of the book is very clearly a different animal from the "educated" sample who provided the raw material on which it is

based. Compare the following: 1. "Noun phrases may be coordinated syntactically (with coordinators) or asymmetrically (without coordinators)." In polysyndetic coordination, coordinators are inserted between each pair of noun phrases." 2. "Use it as a mixer for my um lemonade and lime lemon lime and someone introduced it to me the other day."

The first is from a summary of a section on noun phrases; the second is cited as an example of how a yes-no question (in this case: "Do you drink quite a lot of it?") may elicit more than a one-word answer. The syntactically coordinated educated classes of Example 1, for whom this book is intended, are clearly a different bunch from the vodka-and-lime educated classes of Example 2. But (there we go again, starting

a sentence with a conjunction) would it have made a difference if the original sample of English-speakers had been more stringently selected? Prof. Greenbaum explains that the sample was restricted to educated people, "those who had completed their secondary school education, but we made one or two exceptions. For example, we included examples from John Major and the Queen." A more restrictive sample, he believes, would not have made very much difference. It is difficult to agree, particularly when the approach of the book is so determinedly non-condemnatory of incorrect English. When I accused Prof. Greenbaum of being pedantically non-prescriptive, he denied the charge, maintaining that the book clearly differentiates between correct and incorrect. Yet he only very rarely goes beyond "non-standard" or "less formal" as terms of reproach.

"I'd go to the Palmer one if I was you," is cited as an example of how the past indicative has been replacing the subjunctive were, "particularly in less formal use." A sentence beginning: "Schmidt (1982) explained this phenomenon..." is described as a "controversial" use of treating a plural noun ending in -s as singular. "We don't want none neither," is "non-standard." Worst of all, "They're making a birthday party for their youngest, which I'm invited to it," fails to attract even mild disapproval. It is simply an example of how: "resumptive pronouns are sometimes introduced, echoing the relative pronoun."

computer translation or machine transcription of the spoken language. It will be invaluable to linguistic theorists and teachers of high-level colloquial English as a foreign language. It may even, eventually, be a starting point for a series of grammars of all forms of English, both standard and non-standard. But lumping them together gives the impression that the rules of language are far more flexible than they actually are. Each non-standard form is a language game with its own set of rules. Nobody has the choice between saying "He hasn't eaten anything," and "E ain't eaten nuffink." It's one or the other. Each is correct within its own domain. Whatever the liberation grammarians may tell us, we should all be fighting to preserve the unique status of standard English, without which there would be no universally accepted form of the language for the precise and unambiguous expression of complex ideas.

The main trouble with the OEG, however, is that, with the word "Grammar" in the title, it will be acquired automatically by libraries and institutions, placed on the shelves with the grammar books and consulted in vain by people looking for clear rules of good English. Attracted by the words "ground-breaking" new authority" and "ideal for non-specialists" which appear on the cover, they are liable to find that the book is not quite what they expect.

Finally, lest I be (subjunctive) accused of failing (gerund) my pedantry duties, I ought to point out at least one grammatical error in the book. Here's a long sentence from the middle of page 27: "Chomsky's conception of competence in most of his work is restricted to the knowledge that enables a native speaker to produce an indefinitely large number of sentences, some of which are novel in the sense that they do not replicate sentences that the speaker (and perhaps anybody else) has produced before." Look at the bit in the brackets. That "and" should be an "or". That's not non-standard, that's a mistake. Innit?

The Independent

King cites success of Cairo talks

(Continued from page 1)

continue to try my best to get things together, to try to get them to deal with all the cracks that have occurred as a result of the last several years, and to ensure, as a result, the integrity of Iraq and the unity of its people, and I hope that, God willing, we'll somehow see Iraq out of what it is facing right now, and the people of Iraq enjoying life as everyone deserves to live."

With regard to the pan-Arab situation the King said: "We hope to achieve further successes in the future... and we realise only too well President Mubarak's role in his efforts to rally the Arab countries and unify their ranks and end their differences. I reaffirm to his excellency that we support him with all our might."

In reply to a question concerning Jordanian-Israeli relations and the Kingdom's relations with Iraq, the King said: "Jordan maintains normal relations with Israel as we are in a state of peace. We have reached comprehensive agreements with that country, and the peace process has gone through all its constitutional stages and has been completed. Now we are seeking ways to make people in the region feel the change and the benefits of peace which open the door for our people to build and achieve their aspirations."

who deserve to be rid of the situation they are living in at present," King Hussein said. In reply to a question about Jordanian-Egyptian relations, the King said: "I believe that they are exemplary and warm and we are going ahead on the way of construction in various fields. As it is known we hold periodic meetings at the heads-of-state level and ministerial meetings and we hope that in the future we will translate many of our hopes into concrete facts through our cooperation. Thank God the situation is satisfactory and the meetings are continuing."

"Egypt is the biggest Arab sister state and Egypt has been playing its role within the Arab World to serve all Arabs."

Referring to the Arab League the King said that it is the oldest regional organisation "and I hope that the Arab countries will work under its umbrella for integration and I hope the Arab countries will cooperate with one another in a spirit of mutual respect and towards giving our coming generations a more decent and better life."

In reply to a question about terrorism King Hussein said: "I believe I can speak in my name and on behalf of President Mubarak. Terrorism is alien to our religion and our faith and all that in which we believe and represent. We firmly stand against terrorism with all our might because it targets the innocent people... We likewise condemn all forms of terrorism and it is our duty to defend our religion through confronting (this scourge) and all attempts to distort Islam and the Arab traditions and character."

On the Israeli elections the King said: "I have nothing to say about that because it is an internal Israeli affair. I believe that setting a date for the elections ahead of schedule could have its good effect on the achievement of a comprehensive peace. As to our relations with Israel, they are normal and warm and we are looking for all ways to reap the fruit of peace for our people."

King Hussein was accompanied on the visit to Egypt by an official delegation that included Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Chief of the Royal Court Awn Khasawneh, the King's military secretary Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, the King's advisor on national security affairs Mustafa Qaisi, the ministers of public works, justice, agriculture and information.

U.N., Iraq discuss oil production

(Continued from page 12)

of food and medical supplies, with \$150 million worth per quarter to northern Iraq. Iraqi delegation chief Abdul Amir Al Anbari on Friday did not comment to reporters as he entered the U.N. building. Chief U.N. negotiator

Hans Corell informed the Security Council on Wednesday that the talks were proceeding in a "businesslike" and "fruitful" atmosphere. Both sides say that the talks which opened here Feb. 6 will continue until an agreement is reached, and there is no sign of an adjournment.

Palestinian, Israelis

(Continued from page 1)

In a compromise a hip-high road divider will be built outside the tomb instead of a 6-foot-high wall, said Shlomo Dror, a spokesman for Israeli Gen. Oren Shahor, the government's advisor on Palestinian affairs.

In Jerusalem, some 250,000 Muslims prayed in the Al Aqsa Mosque compound to mark the last Friday of the fasting month of Ramadan.

On Thursday, Israel had eased its closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, allowing Palestinians over 30 to enter Jerusalem for the prayers. The closure was imposed Monday amid warnings that Muslim militants planned to carry out suicide

bombings in Israel. Police deployed reinforcements around the walled old city during Friday's prayers and blocked off streets leading to the mosque.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat complained Friday that the closure was a "big breach" of Israel-Palestinian agreements. Mr. Arafat spoke after prayers at the Salah Mosque in Gaza city.

Also Friday, gunmen fired from the Gaza Strip on Israeli soldiers patrolling a security fence. No one was injured, the Israeli army said.

Israeli soldiers searching the area found the hideout used by the gunmen as well as three sets of footprints and empty shells, the army said.

NATO captures terror camp

(Continued from page 1)

out 10 kilometres south of Fojnica about 40 kilometres west of Sarajevo at about 2 p.m. (1300 GMT) on Thursday.

They surrounded the base and captured the three presumed Iranians in the house. Eight Bosnian men were later

detained on their way to the location.

NATO officials said captured documents made clear the eight Bosnians captured at the camp were employed by the government's ministry of interior as trainee intelligence agents.

Beirut demolished building

(Continued from page 1)

of the building shouting at them. But just as they stopped, the building collapsed, a neighbour in the crowd told Reuters. He declined to give his name.

"We hold Solidere board responsible for this reckless and irresponsible act... it is an outrage approaching premeditated murder in which the value of poor peoples' lives is belittled," the official National News Agency (NNA) quoted Hizbollah's

Mohammad Radd as saying. Amal, led by parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, demanded an investigation, calling the disaster "a crime. Solidere is held responsible for."

"This is premeditated murder... we demand immediate investigation into this crime," Amal parliamentary Deputy Ali Al Khalil told NNA.

Um Hassan Mashoun, a 35-year-old housewife in the crowd, said her family narrowly escaped a similar disaster several months ago.

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of February

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One U.S. dollar	1.3812/22	Canadian dollar	1.4604/14
	1.6354/64	Deutschemarks	1.1878/88
	30.02/06	Dutch guilders	5.0200/50
	1582.74/2	Belgian francs	6.9130/30
	105.10/20	French francs	6.3780/30
	6.9130/30	Italian lire	5.6445/45
	6.3780/30	Japanese yen	1.4030/40
	5.6445/45	Swedish crowns	7.7528/38
	1.4030/40	Norwegian crowns	\$1.5470/80
	7.7528/38	Danish crowns	\$404.60/405.10
	\$1.5470/80	Singapore dollars	
	\$404.60/405.10	Australian dollars	
		Hong Kong dollars	

One sterling
One ounce of gold

Brokers: AFM entered stagnation period

By Khattab Salman
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Share prices gained last week at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) while the market entered a period of stagnation awaiting Eid Al Fitr holidays which commence Monday, brokers said Thursday.

The weekly AFM report showed that the market's index gained 0.14 points closing at 155.2 points, based on the shares of 60 major companies.

"People are waiting for the holidays passively, and the market is still affected by the government's latest decision to halve exports to Iraq," brokers said.

By the end of the week, 1,295,765 shares changed hands through 1,784 contracts. The AFM weekly report put the volume of trading at JD 3,303,006 (\$4,718,580).

The shares of 66 companies were traded with 16 gaining, 37 losing and 13 remaining unchanged.

Sectoral indices showed that the only gainer was the industrial index; going up 1.17 points (0.91 per cent) with a total turnover of (\$1,403,097).

However, the sector of banks and financial institutions had the biggest volume of trading of \$2,409,730 with the sectoral index down by 1.01 points (0.54 per cent). The sector of services companies index slipped 0.41 points (0.33 per cent) with a turnover of \$857,307.

The insurance index lost 0.05 points (\$0.04 per cent) with a trading volume of \$48,445.7.

Enron chooses Aqaba

(Continued from page 8)

steady fixed rate of return with possibility of an upside should capacity of the terminal be raised.

Enron already signed in December a preliminary agreement with Middle East Energy — a venture of Israel's Mashav Ltd. and

DAILY BUSINESS BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

Large agricultural project in Karak and Tafleh to commence in April

THE MINISTRY of Agriculture is scheduled to start implementing the "management of agricultural resources" project in the Karak/Tafleh region in early April, Salem E'kour, the director of project, at the ministry has said.

The cost project, at a total of \$18.5 million, includes a comprehensive agricultural development plan, through the work of agricultural directorates, in Al Qasr, Al Mazar, Karak and Tafleh. Mr. E'kour said the ministry was now taking the necessary measures to commence the project in coordination with the Ministry of Planning. He explained that the project is spread over many programmes such as reclamation of land, protection of soil, plantation of land, agricultural development and fencing. Of special importance, Mr. E'kour said, are the maintenance of springs in the area and improving the existing irrigation methods in addition to providing lending sources for the farmers to encourage small income-generating family projects. The project will continue for seven years (Al Dustour).

Free Zones Corporation to raise charges

FREE ZONES Corporation Director General Falah Qudah said that new regulations would be issued raising charges for services at the free zones so as the corporation would be able to provide better services for investors and to make the Jordanian free zones attractive areas for investment and more capable of competing with neighbouring free zones. Mr. Qudah explained that the decision to reconsider the charges came after a comparison between those in Jordan and those in neighbouring countries. It has been found that even after raising the charges, the Jordanian free zones will remain better and less costly among all the countries which were included in the comparison, Mr. Qudah indicated. He noted that necessary amounts were allocated in the 1996 budget to complete the development of the free zones at the Queen Alia International Airport and the Sahab Industrial City and to develop new areas in Zarqa and Aqaba in addition to other buildings at a cost of JD 5 million. Mr. Qudah stressed that the private sector would be allowed to set up special industrial free zones and specialised commercial area after reconsidering some articles in the law of Jordanian free zones which will be amended to include clear and frank articles in this regard (Al Dustour).

Cities and Villages Development Bank achieves JD 3.3m net profit

THE CITIES and Villages Development Bank achieved a net profit of JD 3.3 million in 1995, according to bank sources. The net profits to be distributed will be JD 1.8 million, after providing JD 1.5 million in the form of assistance to local councils, the sources said. The bank's board of directors met Tuesday under chairmanship of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Minister Abdul Razzaq Tbeishat and agreed on a formula to distribute the JD 1.5 million net profits. Under the formula, the amount of JD 536,000 will be given to local councils contributing to the bank's capital and JD 1.5 million will be added to the bank's general reserve, in accordance with the bank's law, thus raising to JD 19 million the bank's general reserve. The bank's board endorsed recommendations to grant JD 1.2 million in loans to local councils to finance various production projects, including a handicraft area in Madaba, stores in Ghor Safi and Eidoun. The board also discussed the difficult financial situations of some local councils, which cannot pay the salaries of their staff and agreed to work out a programme for addressing such difficulties. The programme envisages among other things an increase in the local council's revenues, a reduction in expenditure for the current fiscal year in accordance with the council's approved budget, and providing the necessary funding for the councils concerned to enable them to run their own financial affairs efficiently (Al Ra'i).

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHUBHAM
TELEPHONE: 407171 / 407179
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (10/02/1996 - 14/02/1996)
WEEKLY REPORT

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ABAS BANK PSC	392,675	135.000	235.000	234.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	33,707	4.380	4.380	4.370
CASINO AMMAN BANK	45,132	4.500	4.500	4.500
BANK OF JORDAN	355,820	3.350	3.350	3.350
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	4,949	1.160	1.160	1.170
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	17,454	2.670	2.670	2.640
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK/NEW	9,148	2.550	2.550	2.540
TAJ HOUSING BANK	50,493	5.000	5.000	4.970
JORDAN KIWAT BANK	32,165	2.750	2.750	2.740
ABAS JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	38,104	2.040	2.040	1.020
JORDAN ISLANDIC BANK	55,420	3.020	3.020	3.000
SUBTERRANEAN BANK	119,450	3.810	3.810	3.820
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	32,500	3.130	3.130	3.150
REIT ELAL SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOM MONTREAL	17,421	3.520	3.520	3.490
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	14,364	3.100	3.100	3.040
ABAS BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	66,234	0.860	0.860	0.800
MEZALAN INVESTMENT BANK	2,833	3.230	3.230	3.150
	409,444	1.350	1.350	2.790

INDEX NUMBER: 155.20
CHANGE: +0.14

BANKS SECTOR

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ABAS BANK PSC	392,675	135.000	235.000	234.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	33,707	4.380	4.380	4.370
CASINO AMMAN BANK	45,132	4.500	4.500	4.500
BANK OF JORDAN	355,820	3.350	3.350	3.350
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	4,949	1.160	1.160	1.170
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	17,454	2.670	2.670	2.640
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK/NEW	9,148	2.550	2.550	2.540
TAJ HOUSING BANK	50,493	5.000	5.000	4.970
JORDAN KIWAT BANK	32,165	2.750	2.750	2.740
ABAS JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	38,104	2.040	2.040	1.020
JORDAN ISLANDIC BANK	55,420	3.020	3.020	3.000
SUBTERRANEAN BANK	119,450	3.810	3.810	3.820
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	32,500	3.130	3.130	3.150
REIT ELAL SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOM MONTREAL	17,421	3.520	3.520	3.490
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	14,364	3.100	3.100	3.040
ABAS BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	66,234	0.860	0.860	0.800
MEZALAN INVESTMENT BANK	2,833	3.230	3.230	3.150
	409,444	1.350	1.350	2.790

INDEX NUMBER: 155.20
CHANGE: +0.14

INSURANCE SECTOR

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ABAS BANK PSC	392,675	135.000	235.000	234.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	33,707	4.380	4.380	4.370
CASINO AMMAN BANK	45,132	4.500	4.500	4.500
BANK OF JORDAN	355,820	3.350	3.350	3.350
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	4,949	1.160	1.160	1.170
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	17,454	2.670	2.670	2.640
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK/NEW	9,148	2.550	2.550	2.540
TAJ HOUSING BANK	50,493	5.000	5.000	4.970
JORDAN KIWAT BANK	32,165	2.750	2.750	2.740
ABAS JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	38,104	2.040	2.040	1.020
JORDAN ISLANDIC BANK	55,420	3.020	3.020	3.000
SUBTERRANEAN BANK	119,450	3.810	3.810	3.820
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	32,500	3.130	3.130	3.150
REIT ELAL SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOM MONTREAL	17,421	3.520	3.520	3.490
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	14,364	3.100	3.100	3.040
ABAS BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	66,234	0.860	0.860	0.800
MEZALAN INVESTMENT BANK	2,833	3.230	3.230	3.150
	409,444	1.350	1.350	2.790

INDEX NUMBER: 155.20
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SERVICES SECTOR

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ABAS BANK PSC	392,675	135.000	235.000	234.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	33,707	4.380	4.380	4.370
CASINO AMMAN BANK	45,132	4.500	4.500	4.500
BANK OF JORDAN	355,820	3.350	3.350	3.350
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	4,949	1.160	1.160	1.170
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	17,454	2.670	2.670	2.640
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK/NEW	9,148	2.550	2.550	2.540
TAJ HOUSING BANK	50,493	5.000	5.000	4.970
JORDAN KIWAT BANK	32,165	2.750	2.750	2.740
ABAS JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	38,104	2.040	2.040	1.020
JORDAN ISLANDIC BANK	55,420	3.020	3.020	3.000
SUBTERRANEAN BANK	119,450	3.810	3.810	3.820
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	32,500	3.130	3.130	3.150
REIT ELAL SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOM MONTREAL	17,421	3.520	3.520	3.490
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	14,364	3.100	3.100	3.040
ABAS BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	66,234	0.860	0.860	0.800
MEZALAN INVESTMENT BANK	2,833	3.230	3.230	3.150
	409,444	1.350	1.350	2.790

INDEX NUMBER: 155.20
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WOLLEN INDUSTRIES

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
THE JORDAN WOOLSPIN MILLS	7,491	3.560	3.560	3.560
ABAS PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	13,018	7.500	7.500	7.600
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	87,988	4.530	4.530	4.440
JORDAN DAILY	8,040	4.190	4.190	4.200
THE JORDAN TILES MANUFACTURING	20,655	2.550	2.550	2.420
JORDAN PAPER & CARDBOARD FACTORIES	7,380	2.280	2.280	2.200
NAPIA INDUSTRIES	1,170	3.630	3.630	3.750
DAM AL DARQ DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	56,079	7.320	7.320	7.160
ABAS ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	49,613	5.450	5.450	5.420
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	17,624	0.540	0.540	0.530
ABAS PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	47,450	1.410	1.410	1.420
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	7,854	1.630	1.630	1.630
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	7,854	0.990	0.990	0.980
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	6,798	1.410	1.410	1.380
JORDAN ROPEWORK INDUSTRIES	5,535	0.990	0.990	0.960
JORDAN SULPHUR-CHEMICAL	3,874	1.150	1.150	1.150
ABAS CENTER FOR PHARMA. & CHEMICALS	13,221	1.425	1.425	1.400
MANHARA INVESTMENT	4,076	1.550	1.550	1.500
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	61,349	3.050	3.050	2.990
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	10,254	1.970	1.970	1.940
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	32,828	1.320	1.320	1.280
EL-SAY READY WARE MANUFACTURING CO.	143,929	3.300	3.300	2.830
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	20,885	1.360	1.360	1.360
UNION CHEMICAL & VEGETABLE OIL INDUSTRY	742	1.490	1.490	1.460

INDEX NUMBER: 155.20
CHANGE: +0.14

PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (10/02/1996 - 14/02/1996)

WEEKLY REPORT

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
CENTRAL GENERAL TRADING & STORAGE	7,378	0.690	0.690	0.660
JORDAN TRADE FACILITIES	26,723	0.790	0.790	0.770
ABAS PTN INV.CO	12,326	0.920	0.920	0.900
UNKNOWN COMPANY	31,250	1.370	1.370	0.850
UNION INVESTMENT CORP. 50K	206,181	0.860	0.860	0.830
ABAS FOOD & MEDICAL APPLIANCE	986	0.790	0.790	0.780
ABAS INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	398	0.600	0.600	0.590
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MACHINERY	13,732	0.400	0.400	0.380
NATIONAL CHURCHER INDUSTRIES CO.LTD	15,940	1.640	1.640	1.600
NATIONAL TEXTILE & PLASTIC IND. CO	2,804	0.850	0.850	0.830
HAVER DING & MOULDS	9,311	0.700	0.700	0.700
NEO PLASTIC	4,554	0.760	0.760	0.740
JORDAN STEEL	27,004	0.940	0.940	0.920
ABAS ELECTRIC INDUSTRIES	2,948	0.670	0.670	0.640
UNION TOBACCO	20,710	1.200	1.200	1.180
ABAS PHARMACEUTICALS	2,167	0.790	0.790	0.760
INDUSTRIES ENGINEERING	10,709	0.750	0.750	0.720
INDUSTRIAL CERAMIC	4,412	1.250	1.250	1.220
TEXTILE MANUFACTURER	2,017	0.520	0.520	0.490
PEARL SANITARY PAPER CONVERTING	240	0.800	0.800	0.800
NATIONAL POLYMER 50K	396	0.800	0.800	0.820
MIDDLE EAST COMPLEX	9,418	0.780	0.780	0.760
NATIONAL MILITARY ENG.INDS./NAMICO	139,300	0.910	0.910	0.890

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Ahli meet Orthodoxi tonight in first division final

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Kingdom's basketball season draws to a close Saturday night with the much awaited clash of all-time rivals Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxi at the Sports Palace.

The match concludes a rather short championship which took a month to complete with only five teams competing. The season however, will be remembered for relatively good fan attendance following the high competitive form of the top three teams.

Al Ahli-Orthodoxi clash has a uniqueness of its own as both teams have had an undisputed dominance over the game for the past two decades. However, the emergence of another serious contender, Al Jazireh, for the first time in the competition showed clearly that the title was no more limited to the top two.

Going into the final match tonight Al Ahli have the advantage as they beat Al Orthodoxi 90-76 in the first round. Al Orthodoxi will therefore have to beat Al Ahli to force a title-deciding three match play-off.

However, fans of both teams are apprehensive about the result as the form of the top two teams, especially Al Ahli, was inconsistent throughout the championship and unlike earlier seasons they did not have an easy path to the final round.

For as long as fans can remember Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxi used to beat all their opponents with a large margin before playing for

the title. Al Orthodoxi won the trophy from 1976-1989. Al Ahli then won in 1990 then lost it to Al Orthodoxi the following year. However, Al Ahli came back to win in 92, 93 and 94 and are eyeing their fourth consecutive crown.

This year, the unbeatable image of both teams greatly changed when they had to put up a big effort against Al Jazireh who, despite remaining in third place this year, demonstrated that they had the ability despite blowing the chance to win the title.

Al Jazireh gave the former champions a hard time and surprised fans before losing 72-66 in the first round. However, the competition's major surprise was Al Jazireh's 76-73 win over titleholders Al Ahli.

After Al Ahli solved the snags leading to their slumping form, the came back to beat Al Orthodoxi 90-76 in the first round final.

As the second round started, Al Orthodoxi again found themselves in trouble against Al Jazireh. Veteran Hilal Barakat and Jan Sahlich saved their team and cut Al Jazireh's commanding lead. Al Orthodoxi won 85-75.

Al Jazireh again caused Al Ahli a major headache in their second round encounter as they quickly

stopped Al Ahli's lead and won the first half before leading by 10 points. Al Ahli only managed to win in the final two minutes and after tactical errors on the part of Al Jazireh's less-experienced players.

Therefore, fans and officials of both Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxi cannot put their mind to rest and find it hard to take things for granted after such showings by their respective teams.

With no television coverage of the game at least 3000 fans are expected to pack the Sports Palace at 8:00 p.m. tonight to watch what may be the final match of the season. Enthusiasts and officials hope that Al Orthodoxi will win and force a title-deciding round for the first time giving fans a chance to watch more games and prolong the very short competition.

Going into Saturday's match Al Orthodoxi lead the standings on score difference while Al Ahli are second.

The other teams have already concluded their matches. Al Jazireh came in third for the fourth consecutive year. Their last win was over Al Watani 108-54. Al Jalil finished fourth and Al Watani fifth. Only Al Abbas were relegated after they withdrew prior to the competition.

STANDINGS

	P	W	L	PF	SA	PTS
Orthodoxi	7	6	1	672	448	13
Ahli	7	6	1	600	442	13
Jazireh	8	5	3	626	498	13
Jalil	8	2	6	417	570	10
Watani	8	-	8	460	817	8

Manchester braced for FA Cup collision

LONDON (AFP) — Manchester United's Old Trafford stadium, "the theatre of dreams," will be centre-stage this weekend when United take on City in what promises to be an explosive FA Cup fifth round encounter between two of English football's bitterest rivals.

Hundreds of Manchester City supporters braved freezing temperatures and laid siege to their Maine Road ground when tickets went on sale Thursday morning.

But there are bound to be some disappointed blues with just a 7,000-ticket allocation for a club with more than 15,000 season ticket holders alone.

Those fans, though, will be reassured by the fact that on the four occasions city have beaten United in Cup competitions, they have gone all the way to Wembley.

FA Cup victories in 1926 and 1955 ended in final defeats, but League Cup wins in 1970 led to jubilant scenes beneath the famous twin towers.

Four-times winners City, who reached last 16 with a 2-1 victory over Coventry on Wednesday, last lifted the famous Cup in 1969 and have not won a major trophy since they won the League Cup 20 years ago.

Coventry manager Ron Atkinson, who won the Cup twice while in charge of Manchester United, believes City manager Alan Ball will struggle to overcome his mighty neighbours with his increasingly limited resources.

"I think it will be hard for City, simply because they have played four or five games in a fortnight, while United have probably played twice," said Atkinson.

But Atkinson believes that in the high-octane atmosphere of an FA Cup tie between fierce local rivals, the outcome will always be difficult to predict.

He cites the examples of holders Everton and West Ham, beaten by first division sides Port Vale and Grimsby respectively, as evidence of the competition's romantic unpredictability.

"It's the FA Cup and anything can happen. West Ham have gone out. Everton have gone out and so there have been plenty of shocks. The Cup is unpredictable but they've got a tough job on their hands," added Atkinson.

Ball will be without the suspended Gary Flitcroft, while skipper Keith Curle limped out of Wednesday's clash with a suspected broken leg and Ian Brightwell missed the tie after taking a leg knock.

Ball, though, is defiant about City's chances against United — 3-0 victors at first division Reading in the last round — even though he admitted the loss of key players could prove crucial as his side bid for a first victory at Old Trafford since 1974.

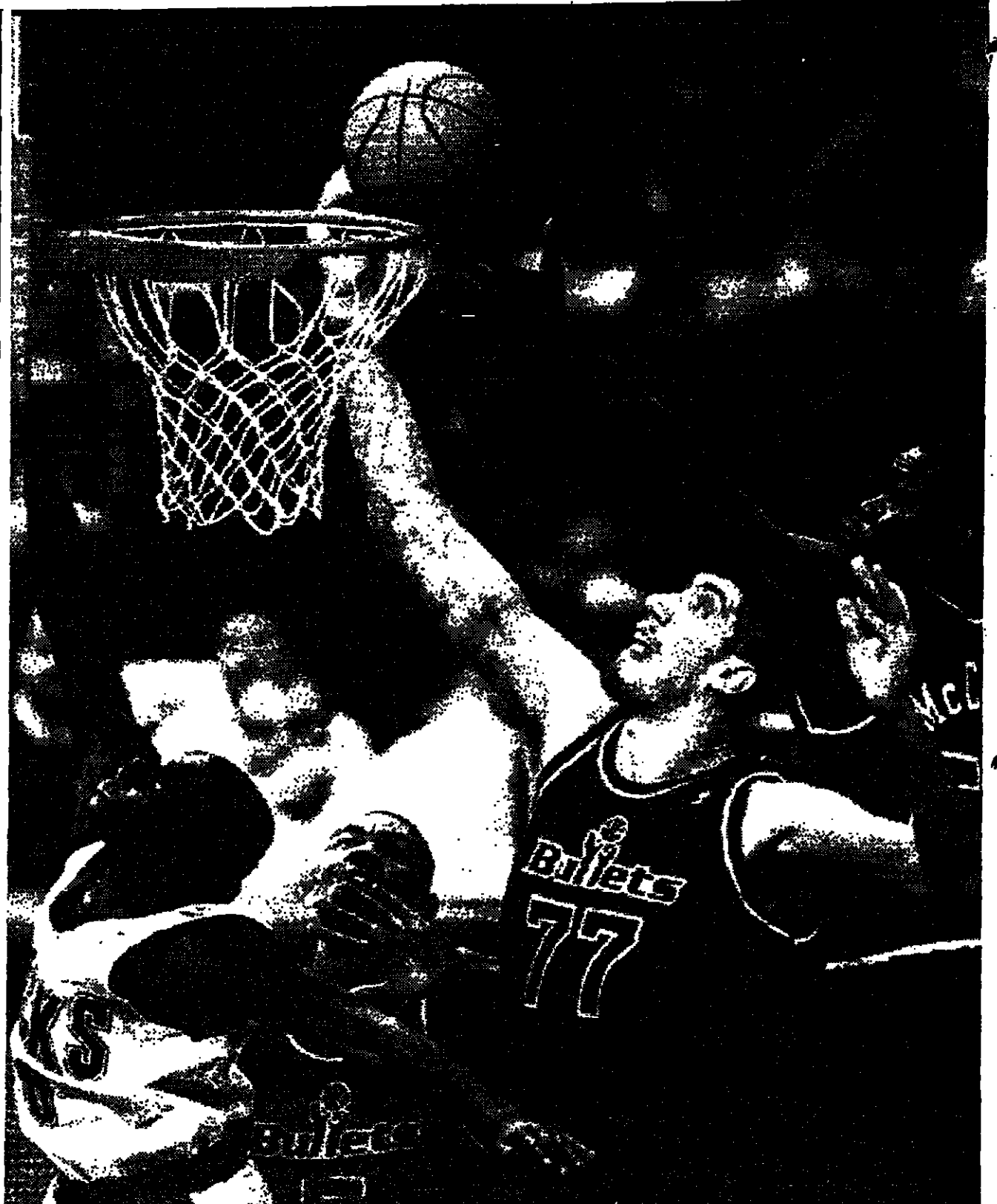
"He said: 'I'm pleased with everyone connected with the club that will be facing United, and for the people of Manchester as a whole because it will be a great tie.'"

Liverpool, 3-1 favourites to lift the trophy for a sixth time, travel to second division Shrewsbury with heavy hearts following the death on Wednesday of former manager Bob Paisley, the most successful manager in British football history.

A minute's silence for Paisley, who joined the club in 1959 and managed it between 1974 and 1983, will be observed before all matches in England.

But the sadness of Paisley's loss may spur Liverpool on to land the one major trophy that always eluded their former manager.

On Monday night Tottenham Hotspur, who have won the trophy a record eight times, will bid for a place in the quarter-finals when they travel to fellow knock-out experts Nottingham Forest.



Washington Bullets' centre Gheorghe Muresan (77) pulls down a defensive rebound with Milwaukee Bucks' Sherman Douglas (left), Bullets Jwan Howard (5) and Bob McCann (photo)

nearby in the first quarter at the Bradley Centre in Milwaukee on Thursday. Milwaukee won 109 to 98 (Reuters photo)

Jordan leads Bulls to OT win over Pistons

AUBURN HILLS, Michigan (R) — Michael Jordan took over in overtime, scoring eight of his 32 points in the extra session, as the Chicago Bulls beat the Detroit Pistons 112-108 Thursday.

Jordan opened overtime with a 15-footer and, after the Pistons erased a five-point deficit, he added a pair of jumpers and two free throws in the final 50 seconds as the Bulls improved to a league-best 44-5.

"I figured if I kept going to the well I'd find some water," Jordan said after the Bulls scored their 14th consecutive victory over Detroit.

Chicago's Dennis Rodman victimised his former team with 19 rebounds, including a tip-in with 0.9 seconds left in the fourth quarter that sent the game into overtime.

Scottie Pippen chipped in 20 points and 13 rebounds. Toni Kukoc added 19 points and Steve Kerr had 17 for the Bulls.

Grant Hill had 20 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists. Joe Dumars added 18 points and Otis Thorpe had 17 and 10 rebounds for the Pistons. But Terry Mills and Hill missed three-pointers for Detroit in the final seconds.

"It is so heart-breaking for me, for our guys to lose a game like this," said Detroit coach Doug Collins.

At Utah, Karl Malone had 30 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists and scored four key points in the final minute as the Jazz overcame a nine-point fourth-quarter deficit for a 106-103 victory over the Dallas Mavericks.

Jason Kidd scored 34 points for the Mavericks, who blew an 86-77 lead with 7:52 remaining when Malone and John Stockton scored five points each in a 12-0 run that put the Jazz in front, 89-86.

A driving layup by Jim Jackson, who had 20 points for Dallas, got the Mavs within two at 105-103. But Kidd's three-point game-tying attempt with less than a second left glanced off the rim.

Stockton had two steals to take his career total to 2,309, one shy of the all-time record held by Maurice Cheeks.

In Houston, Clyde Drexler and Hakeem Olajuwon scored 24 points apiece and the Rockets held off two late rallies by the San Antonio Spurs for a 112-108 victory.

Eldridge Recasner added a career-high 21 points for the Rockets, who snapped a five-game regular-season losing streak against the Spurs.

Vinny Del Negro, scored 31 for the Spurs, who fell out of first in the

Midwest Division, 1½ games behind Utah.

Houston, which led by 17 in the second quarter, saw its lead reduced to 100-99. But Sam Cassell and Drexler made three-pointers to rebuild the lead.

In Toronto, Terrell Brandon scored 20 points and Bobby Phills added 19 as the Cleveland Cavaliers posted their sixth consecutive win with a 95-76 rout of the Raptors.

Chris Mills had 16 points for Cleveland, while Willie Anderson led Toronto with 17.

Cleveland held a 20-point lead after three quarters, but the Raptors came roaring back with a 13-0 run to cut the deficit to 78-71 with 6:45 to play. The Cavs responded with the next 15 points to put the game away.

In Miami, Jimbo Coles scored nine of his 24 points in the final four minutes, lifting the heat to a 97-91 victory over the slumping Denver Nuggets.

Bill Owens added 17

points for the Heat, who held the Nuggets to four points in the last four minutes and won for the third time in their last four games.

Antonio McDyess scored 26 points for Denver, which lost for the 10th time in 14 games.

In Milwaukee, Vin Baker scored 25 points and Glenn Robinson added 23 to lead the Bucks to a 109-98 victory over the struggling Washington Bullets.

Sherman Douglas added 18 points for the Bucks and Robinson scored seven of his points in a decisive 13-2 run bridging the third and fourth quarters.

Gheorghe Muresan scored 29 points and pulled down 13 rebounds and Jwan Howard added 27 points for Washington, losers of four in a row.

In Portland, Charles Barkley scored 24 points and added 10 rebounds to lead the Phoenix Suns to a 96-84 victory over the Trail Blazers.

Wayman Tisdale came off the bench to score 16 points for the Suns, who have won four of their last five games in Portland. Clifford Robinson led the Blazers with 24 points and 11 rebounds.

Thursday's results

Cleveland	95	Toronto	76
Chicago	112	Detroit	109 (OT)
Miami	97	Denver	91
Houston	112	San Antonio	108
Milwaukee	109	Washington	98
Utah	106	Dallas	103
Phoenix	96	Portland	84

Wednesday's results

New Jersey	88	Indiana	87
Detroit	102	Philadelphia	83
Charlotte	120	New York	100
Seattle	130	Minnesota	93
Vancouver	93	Sacramento	86
Golden State	106	Boston	103
LA Lakers	87	Atlanta	86

JORDAN TIMES
TEL: 699634
684311

More favourites fall at Paris Indoor

PARIS (AFP) — Switzerland's 15-year-old Martina Hingis became the fifth seed to be beaten at the \$450,000 Paris Indoor Open on Thursday when she crashed to a shock straight-sets defeat against Italy's 55th-ranked Silvia Farina.

And while Hingis was cursing her inept performance and "escaping" warnings despite smashing her racket in frustration against the Coubertin Stadium's blue carpet surface — top-seed Iva Majoli of Croatia reached the quarter-finals without hitting a ball.

Meanwhile Jennifer Capriati, who had to postpone her comeback to the tour on Tuesday when she sustained an injury training, was reduced to the role of spectator after returning to the stadium for more treatment.

Other winners on Thursday were Miriam Oremans of the Netherlands, home teenage hope Nathalie Dechy, third-seed Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria and the 1994 finalist Julie Halard-Decugis of France.

Hingis, never able to match Farina's speed and determination, was beaten 3-6, 1-6 — squandering the perfect chance to progress towards a first career tournament victory after the early elimination of such favourites as Mary Pierce and Jana Novotna and following Capriati's withdrawal.

The Italian, no respecter of reputations, broke the Swiss player in the sixth game of the first set and never looked back.

Hingis, under relentless pressure from the depth and speed of her 23-year-old opponent's groundstrokes, went from bad to worse and failed to hold her service in the third, fifth and seventh games of the second set.

Farina, ranked a modest 55th but with career victories over top players Kimiko Date and Gabriela Sabatini, now plays Petra Bergerow of Germany for a place in the last four.

Bergerow upset last year's finalist and fourth-seed Mary Pierce late Wednesday. Guadeloupe-born Nathalie

Dechy also caused a surprise. France's 16-year-old 1994 Orange Bowl champion beat 28-year-old compatriot Nathalie Tauziat 7-5, 1-6, 7-5 in an entertaining encounter to reach a showdown against Majoli who is now scheduled to make her first singles appearance just 48 hours before the tournament ends.

Majoli's French opponent Sandrine Testud was advised by the tournament doctor to pull out for fear of aggravating a groin strain she sustained in her three-set, first-round match with Ukraine qualifier Natalia Medvedeva.

The 18-year-old Croat, ranked fourth in the world since her remarkable triumph at Tokyo two weeks ago where she defeated Monica Seles and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, had a bye in the first round.

Miriam Oremans clawed her way back from the brink and saved a match point before beating Austria's Judith Wiesner 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/2) in a thrilling showdown which lasted over three hours.

CANADIANS

CANADIENS

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP WEEK - INVITATION TO REGISTER.

THE EMBASSY OF CANADA, IN MARKING THE CELEBRATION OF CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP WEEK, 12 - 19 FEBRUARY, INVITES ALL CANADIAN CITIZENS RESIDENT IN JORDAN TO REGISTER, OR RECONFIRM THE DETAILS OF THEIR CURRENT REGISTRATION, WITH THE CONSULAR SECTION. THIS CAN BE DONE IN PERSON AT THE CHANCERY IN SHMEISANI, SUNDAY TO THURSDAY, FROM 09:00 TO 11:30 YOU ARE ASKED TO BRING YOUR PASSPORT.

LA SEMAINE DE LA CITOYENNETE CANADIENNE - INVITATION A S'INSCRIRE.

L'AMBASSADE DU CANADA CELEBRE LA SEMAINE DE LA CITOYENNETE CANADIENNE DU 12 AU 19 FEVRIER. NOUS PROFITONS DE CETTE OCCASION POUR INVITER TOUS LES CANADIENS QUI SONT RESIDENTS EN JORDANIE A S'INSCRIRE AUPRES DE LA DIRECTION CONSULAIRE, OU RECONFIRMER LES DETAILS DE LEUR INSCRIPTION. IL SUFFIT DE SE PRESENTER, PASSEPORT CANADIEN EN MAINS, A LA CHANCELLERIE SITUÉE A SHMEISANI DU DIMANCHE AU JEUDI ENTRE 09:00 ET 11:30 HEURES.

TODAY AT

PHILADELPHIA

Tom Hanks
in
Forrest Gump

Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 9:00 p.m.

PLAZA

Nabieleh Oubead/safiyah Al Omaree/Farouq Feeshawi
in
Atabeht Al Settat
(ladie's Step)
Arabic

Shows: 12:30, 2:15, 6:45, 8:30, 10:30

CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
On Deadly Ground
Shows: 12:30, 2:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30
CONCORD "2"
* Jim Carie

Shows: 2:30, 6:15

AMMOUN THEATRE & CINEMA/TEL: 618274 - 618275

Adel Imam & Yusra
in
Birds of Darkness
(Arabic)

Shows: 12:30, 3, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155

"Ahlan Tatbie" play
Welcome Normalisation
Shows: 8:30 p.m.
For reservation call 625155

Riley to get 3 month ban

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australian World Breaststroke record holder Samantha Riley, who has returned a positive drug test, is expected to escape with a maximum penalty of three months enabling her to swim at the Atlanta Olympics, according to top-level swimming sources.

National news agency, Australian Associated Press, reported Friday that according to their sources world swimming governing body FINA was considering a suspension of up to three months for the positive drug test.

Australian Swimming Incorporated could neither confirm nor deny the report.

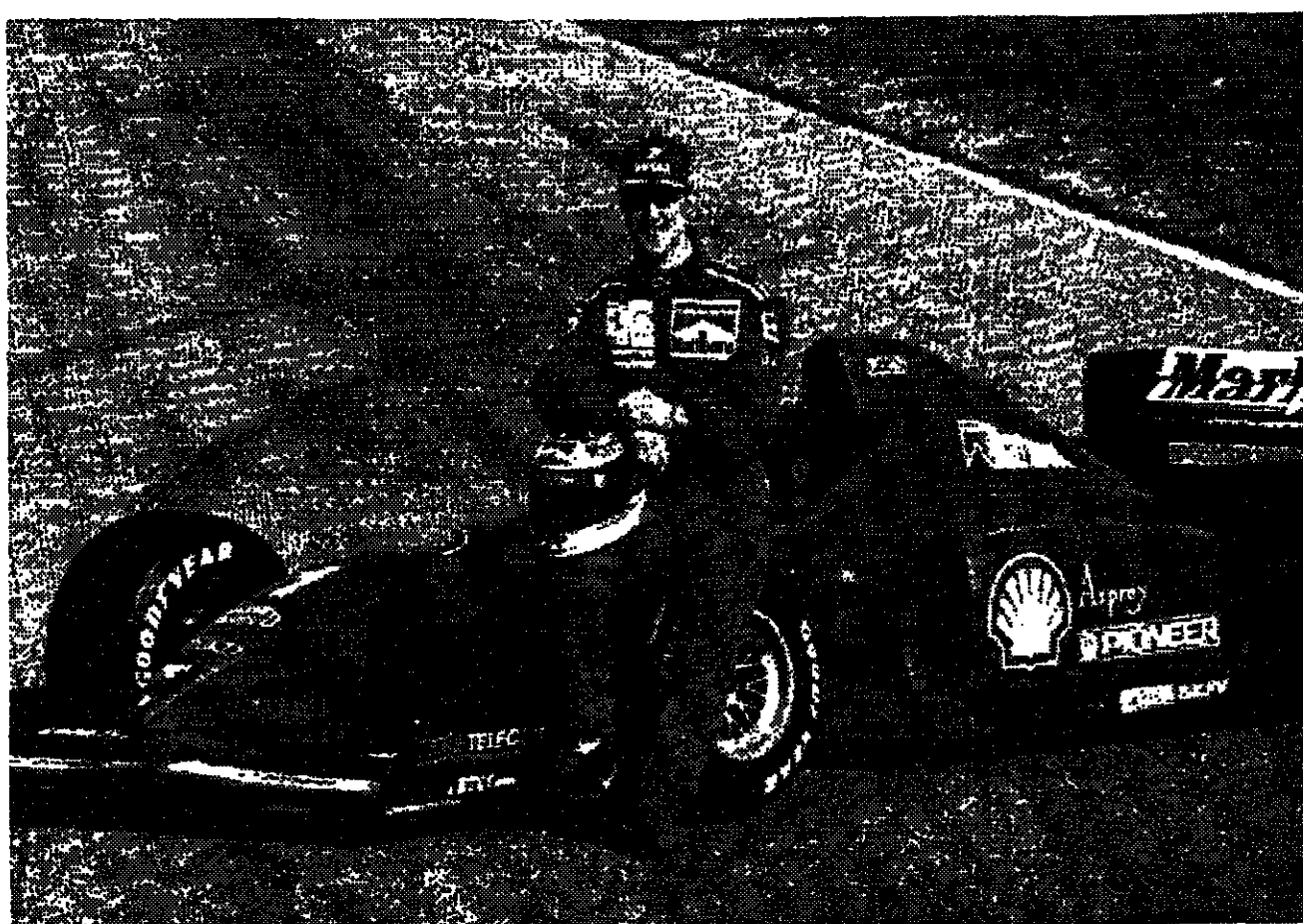
Riley returned a positive test result her coach, Scott Volkner, gave her a prescribed headache tablet.

Riley tested positive to the non-performance enhancing substance, dextropropoxyphene, at the Brazil meet, where she clocked two short course world records.

A three-month penalty, if realised, would be backdated from Dec. 1, the date the sample was taken at the world short course swimming championships in Rio De Janeiro and kept her in line for selection in this year's Atlanta Olympics.

That would allow Riley to compete in the national Olympic selection trials here from April 21-27.

FINA has been lauding with the International Olympic Committee on the case and has the power to give Riley a two-year suspension for the positive test, a sentence which would effectively end her career.



Formula-1 World Champion Michael Schumacher of Germany poses for photographers in front of his new Ferrari F310 racing car during the Ferrari team presentation in

Fiorano of the Ferrari test track. Schumacher will test the new car the next few days (Reuters photo)

Schumacher warns new Ferrari is a winner

FIORANO (AFP) — Double world motor racing champion Michael Schumacher warned here Thursday that his new Ferrari would challenge from the opening race of the season.

"We will be competitive," said Schumacher as the new Ferrari was unveiled.

"My aim is to win two grand prix this season before challenging for the championship next season," he added.

But the German warned Italian race fans not to expect any more than two 1996 victories.

"It would be unrealistic, an excess of optimism," he said.

However, Ferrari chairman Luca Badoer upped the number of wins to three.

"Our objective is to win as many races as possible," said Montezemolo, but added when pressed "that could be

three races."

It will be a hard season," he added, predicting the Williams Renault would be the car to beat with strong challenges from Benetton Renault and McLaren Mercedes.

Team manager Jean Todt also warned about too many expectations from the V10 powered Ferrari.

"The real truth is on the track. We know that the key to success is reliability and to achieve that we have a lot of luck to do," said Todt.

Giovanni Agnelli, whose Fiat company owns a majority of Ferrari, made a surprise appearance at the Fiorano test track ceremony, his first at a Ferrari F1 launch since Fiat took a small stake in the company in 1968.

Agnelli denied reports that after Ferrari signed Schumacher for a reported \$25

million a year, he had given Montezemolo a deadline to win the title or pull Ferrari out of Formula One.

"We never set any deadlines, or an ultimatum," he said, adding to laughter: "We learned from Italian politics that deadlines are never final."

But Agnelli said that while Ferrari road cars were a great commercial success, what was missing was the Formula One world championship.

The new F310 features a V10 engine, the first ever built by Ferrari which has historically favoured V12 designs. Chief designer John Barnard has been urging Ferrari to make the smaller, lighter engine since he returned to the team in 1993.

The engine had given more room for aerodynamic research, which also had to

meet new rules changes for extra cockpit safety. Barnard said.

"Most of our work has gone into the aerodynamic changes, which is partly why the car is late," he said.

But he admitted the delay was also because the car failed its first mandatory crash test and had to be modified.

The F310 features striking high, vertical oval air intakes in sidepods which unusually end well above the lowest body level. It is similar to the 1993 Ferrari, nicknamed the F15 for its fighter style intakes. It also has an all new six speed transverse gearbox. Barnard said he hoped the drivers would find the car as driveable as last year's "but two seconds a lap faster."

The opening race is the Melbourne Grand Prix on March 10.

"Missing three months is tough, unless it's women's tennis, and then you can take two years," added Agassi, in a questionable taste reference to Monica Seles's swift rise back to the top of the women's game.

He was pleased, particularly as this competition will

Wihdat win 5th Premier League trophy

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Wihdat pleased a record 25,000 fans when they defeated Al Baqaa 4-1 to retain their Premier League trophy at Amman International Stadium Thursday night.

Al Wihdat's win secured them the title for the fifth time regardless of the results of their closest rivals, Al Faisali's surprising 2-1 defeat to Al Ahli earlier in the day kept them in third place while Al Ramtha settled for the runner up position as the top three standings remained unchanged for the second year.

Al Wihdat received their prestigious trophy from Jordan Soccer Federation president His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein who attended the match together with Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh.

Al Wihdat's win came as no big surprise. They had maintained the best record in the league with only two defeats. While they only topped the standings two weeks ago, Al Wihdat ended the competition with an unbeaten record in the second leg of the competition.

Their opponents Thursday had no incentive to play better as they had already

been relegated being among the last four teams in the standings.

Al Wihdat opened scoring early in the third minute of the match with a powerful shot by Marwan Al Shammali from just outside the penalty zone.

Eight minutes later, Hisham Abdul Mune'm got a pass inside the zone which he carefully placed to the right of Al Baqaa's goalkeeper to give his team a 2-0 lead.

Al Wihdat had the advantage and set the pace throughout the match. Al Baqaa had a fragmented defence and could not stop penetrations by Al Wihdat's players who could have scored more but lost half a dozen chances.

In the 34th minute Al Wihdat's Sufyan Abdullah blasted a powerful shot which slipped through the hands of Al Baqaa's goalkeeper giving Al Wihdat a 3-0 lead.

The match's most beautiful goal was scored five minutes before the end of the half by Al Baqaa's Jamal Wheidi who got a carefully pass from a teammate and scored his team's consolation goal from a header ending the first half 3-1 for Al Wihdat.

Munir Abu Hantash netted Al Wihdat's fourth goal midway throughout the second half as thousands of

fans began celebrations in the stands. Teammates Jihad and Hisham Abdul Mune'm and Abdullah Abu Zam'eh lost other scoring chances but did not seem to mind as they had already secured the win.

Al Wihdat had first won the Premier League in 1980 and then won it again in 1987, 1991 and 1994 and now added 1995.

Their win Thursday secured Al Wihdat two of the Kingdom's four soccer trophies as they had also won the Jordan Soccer Federation Shield trophy in 1995 while Al Faisali won the other two titles — the Jordan Cup and Cup Winners' Cup. Al Ramtha finished runners-up in both the Jordan Cup and Premier League.

Here's a look at Premier League champions since 1980:

1980	Wihdat
1981	Ramtha
1982	Ramtha
1983	Faisali
1984	Amman
1985	Faisali
1986	Faisali
1987	Faisali
1988	Faisali
1989	Faisali
1990	Faisali
1991	Wihdat
1992	Faisali
1993	Faisali
1994	Wihdat
1995	Wihdat

Russian men lead figure skating event

ST. PETERSBURG (R) — Deposed European champion Ilya Kulik of Russia won the men's short programme at the Centennial on ice figure skating event on Thursday as new American champion Rudy Galindo withdrew injured.

In the pairs, ex-European silver medalists Mandy Woetzel and Ingo Steuer of Germany — the latter skating in pain from a back injury — took the lead.

European bronze medalist Kulik, 18, rediscovered his best form with a clean routine that featuring a triple axel-triple toe loop combination. Six of the seven judges placed him first.

He was pleased, particularly as this competition will

decide which two Russians will go to next month's world championships in Edmonton.

Alexei Yagudin, aged 15, held second place after a small slip from compatriot Igor Pashkevich, silver medalist from the year's Europeans.

Olympic champion Alexei Urmanov of Russia was fifth after failing to hold the landing on his triple lutz.

Scott Davis, fourth at the recent U.S. Nationals, was the highest placed American in sixth place.

Galindo sprained his left

ankle in practice on February 1 and is still experiencing problems jumping off the foot.

He said: "I really wanted to compete. This is my first injury in skating and I'm disappointed but this will make me tough for the worlds. It may be the best thing I need to prepare right."

European champion Viacheslav Zagorodniuk of Ukraine started well with a triple axel-double toe loop combination but could only manage a double lutz and placed seventh.

Sampras, Agassi, Chang advance in San Jose

SAN JOSE (R) — Top Seed Pete Sampras and second seed Andre Agassi eased into the quarter-finals of the 328,000 Sybase Open on Thursday, while third seed Michael Chang struggled before joining his compatriots in the final eight.

Sampras overwhelmed Portugal's Nuno Marques 6-1, 6-3 for his second victory in as many days and Agassi posted a workmanlike 6-4, 6-4 second-round win over fellow American Jonathan Stark.

But Chang, the Australian Open runner-up, took nearly two hours to subdue south African baseliner Marcos Ondruska 4-6, 6-1, 6-4.

The turning point of the contest came at 3-3 in the third set when Chang broke Ondruska in a game that

went to deuce seven times.

"That was a real tight game," Chang said. "It could have went either way but I was fortunate enough to convert."

Chang, who last weekend led the United States to a first-round Davis Cup win over Mexico, said he enjoys a good battle but could use an easy match or two.

"My preference is to cruise all the way through the tournament," Chang joked.

"But today's match was good test. I had to hit a lot of balls so that will help me as the tournament goes on."

Chang caught a break for the next round with Jason Stoltenberg advancing to meet him on a walkover when fifth-seeded Australian teen sensation Mark Philippoussis pulled out of the

tournament with a bone bruise on his heel.

While Stark served and volleyed with moderate success, Agassi had him on his heels during his own service games, running stark from corner to corner on the baseline.

"That's the best I hit the ball since last summer," said Agassi, who missed three months at the end of last year with a chest injury. "I can feel my game just starting to creep around. With each swing, I'm getting closer," he said.

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The Modern School "AI - Assriyya" is in need of qualified LGCSE teachers of at least five years experience in this field. Please apply to the following address: P.O. Box 11002 - 11821 Amman - Jordan. Telefax 837267/ 837859.

JOB VACANCY

OXFORD SCHOOLS - (Under Establishing) is seeking to recruit an English Language Co-ordinator with the following qualifications:-

1. University graduate - BA or MA - English Literature.
2. Minimum five years experience.
3. A knowledge of teaching IGCSE courses.
4. Attended training courses in the new methodology approach.

Please send your CV to OXFORD SCHOOLS P.O. Box 960623 Amman - 11196 - Jordan - or to Fax No. 668671, before 7th of March 1996.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice to Danish citizens in Jordan
Danish citizens residing in Jordan are invited to register with the Royal Danish Consulate-General, 24 Sharif Abdul Hamid Sharaf Street, Shmeisani, P.O.Box 222, Amman 11118. Registration may be made in person or by mail. Danish citizens who have already registered with the Consulate-General are invited to renew their registration - and in future to do so every year. Danish citizens are also invited to notify the Consulate-General upon permanent departure.

Meddelelse til danske statsborgere i Jordan
Danske statsborgere med fast bopæl i Jordan bedes lade sig registrere ved det danske Generalkonsulatet, 24 Sharif Abdul Hamid Sharaf Street, Shmeisani, P.O.Box 222, Amman 11118. Registrering kan ske ved personlig henvendelse på Generalkonsulatet eller pr. brev. Danske statsborgere, som allerede har ladet sig registrere, bedes bekræfte, at de fortsat har fast bopæl i Jordan. En sådan genbekræftelse bedes foretaget hvert år. Danske statsborgere, som flytter fra Jordan, bedes fore afrejse give Generalkonsulatet meddelelse herom.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIA HIRSHI
GOREN Bridge Master Services, Inc.

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q. 1 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- AK6 CAJ9542 OKQ4 4Q3
- The bidding has proceeded:
- | | SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----|-------|------|-------|------|
| 10 | Pass | 2s | Pass | Pass |
| 20 | Pass | 2s | Pass | Pass |
| 30 | Pass | 2s | Pass | Pass |
| 40 | Pass | 2s | Pass | Pass |
- What do you bid now?
- A - Partner's bidding shows at least six clubs and five spades to, despite the fact that some of your diamond values would be wasted at a suit contract, you have a golden card in each of partner's suits. Bid four clubs.
- Q. 2 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
- 4QJ7 QAKQ10762 QAB3 4Void
- The bidding has proceeded:
- | | SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----|-------|------|-------|------|
| 10 | Pass | 1s | Pass | Pass |
| 20 | Pass | 1s | Pass | Pass |
| 30 | Pass | 1s | Pass | Pass |
| 40 | Pass | 1s | Pass | Pass |
- What do you bid now?
- A - You don't need much from partner for slam — king of spades and king of diamonds would probably do — so any heart bid by you now would be woefully inadequate.
- Advise partner of your interest by jumping shifting to three diamonds. Since that suit is lower ranking than the one in which you intend playing, there's no risk involved.
- Q. 3 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- AK104 08 QAK102 4AK983
- The bidding has proceeded:
- | | WEST | NORTH | SOUTH | EAST |
|----|------|-------|-------|------|
| 10 | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 20 | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 30 | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 40 | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
- What action do you take?
- A - Your double of four hearts has already shown a very good hand, so don't fear that you might be missing slam. If partner had any ambitions in that direction, he would have found some bid other than four spades to enlist your cooperation.
- Q. 4 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
- 4Q872 QK10 QAK 4AKJ73
- The bidding has proceeded:
- | | SOUTH | WEST | NORTH | EAST |
|----|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1s | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 2s | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 3s | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 4s | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
- What action do you take?
- A - Obviously you and West have almost every point in the deck. We would suggest you double if you had a guarantee that the opponents would not run to a red suit. Since you don't, we suggest you pass and hope for a small profit.
- Q. 5 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
- 410652 Q8763 QQ83 46
- The bidding has proceeded:
- | | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH | WEST |
|----|-------|------|-------|------|
| 1s | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 2s | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 3s | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 4s | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
- What action do you take?
- A - North's cue-bid promises a very powerful hand with at least one four-card major, not necessarily both. Rather than pick a suit yourself, cue-bid three diamonds. That tells partner to bid his second suit and, since you could not respond to the opening bid, doesn't promise any additional strength to what you have.
- Q. 6 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- 4Q10543 QJ854 07 4A102
- The bidding has proceeded:
- | | EAST | SOUTH | WEST | NORTH |
|----|------|-------|------|-------|
| 10 | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 20 | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 30 | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 40 | Pass | Pass | Pass | Pass |
- What action do you take?
- A - Partner's balancing no-trump bid could be made with as few as 11-12 points — with the equivalent of a no-trump opening, partner would have doubled first. And had partner been interested in spades, he would have made a takeout double rather than overall in no trump. Pass.

THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF & WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST IS RECRUITING AT ITS HEAD-QUARTERS IN AMMAN:

Head, Social Services, Grade: 20. (VN#HQ/A) 11/96)

Fixed Term Three Years: (Re-Advertisement)

(Monthly take home pay about JD954 plus dependency allowance; plus monthly provident fund JD200 payable at end of service; compulsory medical insurance).

DUTIES: The incumbent of this post is the Agency's senior social development professional, reporting directly to the Director of Relief and Social Services, managing a team of three social development experts at Headquarters and technically responsible for developmental social welfare programmes and projects implemented by field staff in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Palestinian Territories of the West Bank and Gaza. The social services programme includes community development and institution building; poverty alleviation; women in development; community-based rehabilitation and integration of persons with disabilities; and family casework. The Head of the Social Services Office is responsible for input into policy formulation; situation analyses and needs assessments; appropriate strategies and specific objectives; technical guidelines for policy implementation; training of social workers and programme managers in the five field offices; indicators for programme monitoring; and evaluation of programme impact and achievement. S/he co-ordinates with other UNRWA programmes and inter-governmental and non-governmental partners in joint social development ventures, and represents the Agency at relevant United Nations and other professional conferences. Administratively, s/he is responsible for the Office budget, and advises on staffing, logistical and other resource needs.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED: University degree in social welfare or related field, with special emphasis on the application of social work insights and methodologies to developmental programmes, with at least ten years' experience in applying that knowledge including: 1) Practical experience in planning, implementation and evaluation in one or more of the following sectors: community development and institution building, poverty alleviation, rehabilitation and integration of the disabled, developmental women's programmes; and in training local counterparts to run such programmes. 2) At least five years in a senior supervisory capacity in a large international, governmental or non-governmental organisation promoting developmental social services. Excellent command of written and spoken English and Arabic and first-rate communication skills.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS: Thorough knowledge of the Near East environment and cultures; post-graduate degree or diploma directly relevant to one or more aspects of the social services listed above; computer literacy. Will be required to travel extensively in the Agency's area of operations in the Near East. N.B.: The post was previously advertised at Grade 18, it has now been upgraded to Grade 20.

Candidates are requested to submit a detailed UNRWA Personal History Form not later than 13 March 1996 to:

The office of the Coordinator, UNRWA Headquarters Amman, Attention: Personnel Officer, P.O. Box 140157 (Bladder Wadi Seer), Amman 11811, Jordan.

Full consideration will be given to disabled candidates whose disability does not mitigate the effective performance of the duties of the job. Priority will be given to fully qualified registered Palestinians. UNRWA welcomes applications equally from men and women.

Peres says will renew historic alliance with religious parties

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres pledged Friday to renew the historic alliance between his Labour Party and religious factions if he wins general elections to be held in late spring.

Several religious parties have sent signals that they are willing to consider joining a Labour-led coalition or urge followers to abstain in the vote for prime minister, Israeli newspapers said.

Most religious parties have been aligned with the Likud bloc for the past 20 years. But they have been angered by Likud's new union with Tsomet, a secular party that has campaigned to end draft exemptions for Jewish seminary students.

Mr. Peres said Friday that if reelected, he would seek to bring religious parties into the government and would not be swayed by protests from Labour's junior coalition partner, the left-wing, secular Meretz Party.

"I definitely want this coalition to include religious groups," Mr. Peres told

Israel TV. "I am against a rift in the people."

Labour's forerunner, Mapai ruled Israel for its first 20 years in a coalition with the National Religious Party (NRP) and other religious factions. Labour lost power in 1977 when the NRP joined a Likud-led coalition.

Mr. Peres said Friday that the NRP's move to the right was to blame for Labour's failure to return to power for the next 15 years.

Most of the religious parties oppose ceding land to the Palestinians and uprooting Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. They argue that the West Bank and Gaza are part of the Biblical land of Israel promised to the Jews by God.

NRP lawmaker Hanan Porat told Israel Radio Friday that the party would support the opposition Likud and its Prime Minister candidate, Benjamin Netanyahu, but would not rule out joining a government led by Mr. Peres.

"We are not going to com-

mit suicide and if heaven forbid, the Labour Party wins the government, we will have to consider and examine the issues in a real and practical manner," Mr. Porat said.

NRP is a strong supporter of Jewish settlements and opponent to the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy accord. The ultra-orthodox weekly Hashvua reported that the religious Agudat Yisrael Party may instruct its supporters to abstain from voting for prime minister, which would work in favour of Mr. Peres.

Syria denounces 'inflammatory' remarks

Meanwhile, Syria denounced the "inflammatory and provocative" statements coming from Israeli leaders in campaigning for spring elections.

The newspaper of the ruling Baath Party said that "statements from Israeli leaders who reject the principle of a withdrawal from the Syrian Golan Heights, occupied by Israel in 1967 and annexed in 1981, cannot

serve as a just global peace in the region."

"Syria is not concerned about the winner of the elections, but in the party that seriously expresses its desire to establish peace and to conform to international law," Al Baath newspaper said.

The Al Thawra newspaper said the "provocative statements from Israeli leaders do not simply represent electoral slogans."

"To use blackmail to win an election battle should be condemned... It's a violation of the principles of international law," the official newspaper said, adding that a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan is the shortest path to peace.

Syria and Israel are to resume peace talks on Feb. 28 at the Wye Plantation outside Washington, three months ahead of early Israeli elections for a prime minister and parliament.

Israel's main opposition Likud Party has been campaigning on the theme that it will never return the strategic Golan Heights to Syria.

U.N., Iraq discuss oil production, sales

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Iraqi and U.N. negotiators discussed oil and banking-related issues here Friday at oil-for-food talks which could lead to Iraq resuming limited oil exports. U.N. spokeswoman Sylvania Foa said.

Friday's morning session focused on "technical

aspects" of oil production and sales, and banking issues, she told a briefing here. The talks were to continue in the afternoon, she said.

The banking issues at stake concern the setting up of an escrow account which will control the funds released from any future oil sales.

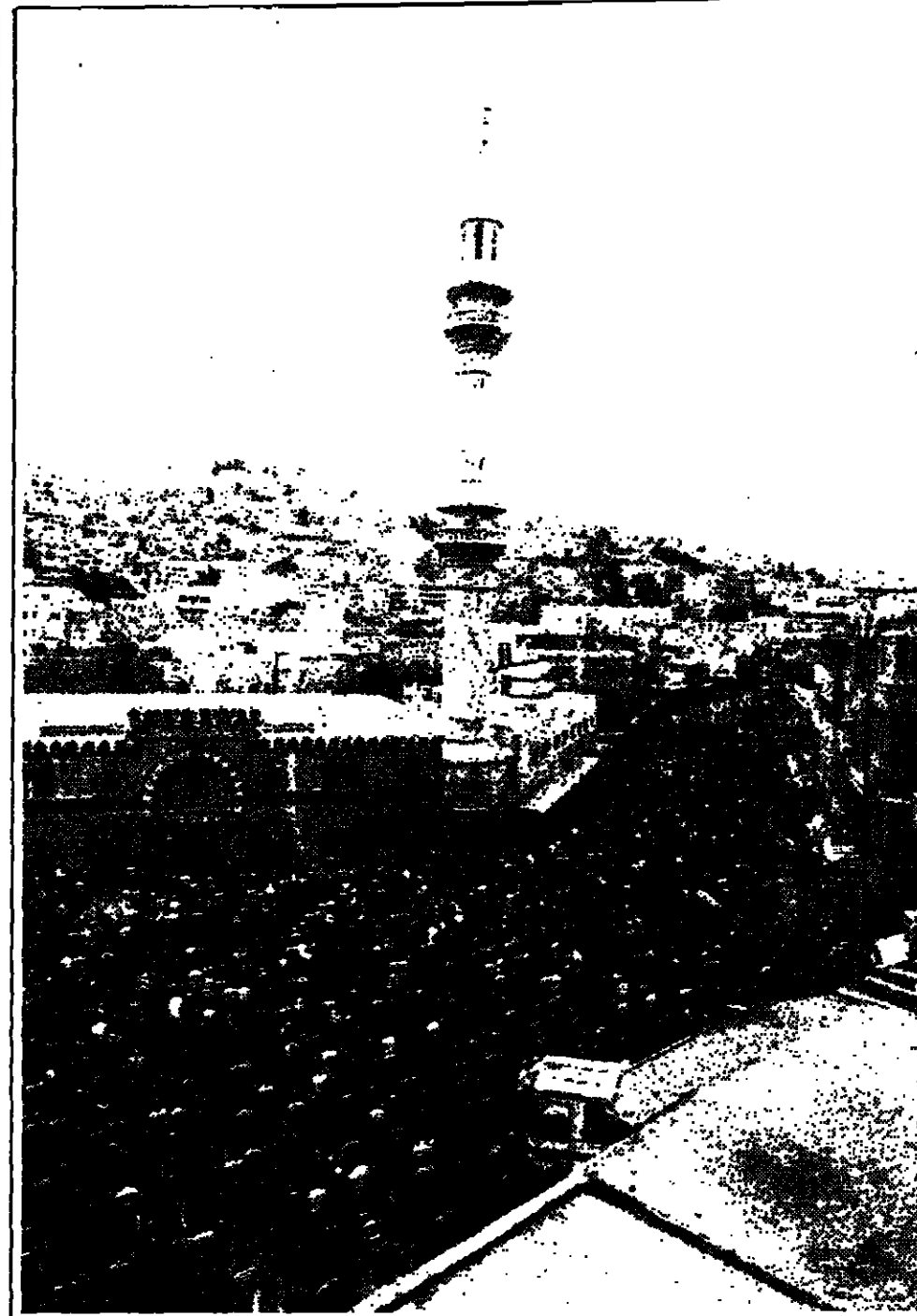
The talks here are focusing on U.N. resolution 986, under which Baghdad would be allowed to export one billion dollars worth of oil per quarter to raise money for humanitarian supplies, under international control.

Security Council Presidency Spokesman James Rubin

told reporters Friday that he was "not aware of any agreement" on the key issue of food distribution, after the talks began focusing on other matters on Thursday.

Resolution 986 insists on the "equitable distribution"

(Continued on page 7)



FRIDAY PRAYERS: Tens of thousands of Jordanians gather in downtown Amman to perform Friday prayers at Al Hussein Mosque (Photo by Yusef Al 'Allan)

Man revives pet dog with kiss of life

SYDNEY (R) — An Australian has proven that man is a dog's best friend by giving his terrier the kiss of life. Journalist Lindsay Tuffin, commenting on local media reports of his extraordinary feat, said he acted out of impulse last Sunday when he wrapped his mouth across his pet Katie's muzzle and "just breathed straight down her throat." He even gave her heart massage as Katie, strangled by her own collar, lay motionless and apparently dead on the Tuffin family's verandah, its dog tag caught between the deck's wooden planks. "Much to my astonishment and great relief, after a minute or so her eyes flickered and her body trembled and gradually she came around," he told Reuters.

For Valentine's Day, a hint of a royal engagement

LONDON (AFP) — The hot Valentine's Day news here was that anyone wishing an appointment with Sophie Rhys-Jones must now call Buckingham Palace and ask for Lieutenant-Colonel Sean O'Dwyer. For the uninitiated, the social significance of this is that Ms. Rhys-Jones is the girlfriend of Queen Elizabeth's youngest son, Prince Edward, and Col. O'Dwyer is Prince Edward's private secretary. Placement of her schedule within the palace orbit conjured a strong scent of a royal betrothal in the offing. The Daily Telegraph reported that friends of the couple "believe an announcement will come soon." Prince Edward and Ms. Rhys-Jones have been an item since 1993, but have gone to great lengths to guard their privacy.

Albright gives colleagues Valentine's Day cookies

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Security Council President Madeleine Albright of the United States marked Valentine's Day by presenting each of her colleagues with a red bag of cookies during closed-door consultations, her spokesman said. "She said to them that although for the past three years she has enjoyed being 'one of the boys' on Valentine's Day she is particularly pleased that she could be in the company of so many handsome and powerful men," he said. Mrs. Albright, who is divorced, is the only woman ambassador on the 15-nation Council.

Policeman awakes from coma after 7 years

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (R) — A Tennessee policeman awoke from a coma more than seven years after being shot in the head and immediately recognised his sons, hospital officials said. Gary Dockery, now 39, emerged from what was a semi-comatose state in a Tennessee hospital. "When he was in that state he was able to blink his eyes, and nod his head once in a while," Dockery, though, had not uttered a word since 1982. After he awoke, he began talking and making jokes. Dockery and his wife, Sharon, were 5 and 12, respectively, when their father was shot, family members said.

Palestinians say Gaza airport to open in May

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Palestinian officials insisted Friday that the Palestinian Authority's first airport will open on schedule in May despite ongoing discussions with Israel over its objections to the project.

Nabil Shaath, planning minister in the self-rule authority, said a meeting with Israeli officials Friday yielded agreement on Palestinian-Israeli cooperation in guaranteeing the security of the airfield being built at Rafah, on the southern tip of the Gaza Strip.

"The work will be finished in May and then we will begin receiving aircraft," Mr. Shaath said in a statement.

But he added that to keep to the timetable, "it will be necessary to work quickly... we must finish all the agreements in the next few weeks."

Israeli officials said Mr. Shaath and General Oran Shohor, coordinator of Israeli activities in the Palestinian territories, agreed among other things to set up three

committees to discuss security arrangements, air traffic control and customs controls over travellers and merchandise using the airport.

It was the latest in a series of meetings at the airport since a tense confrontation earlier this month between Palestinian police and Israeli soldiers sent to halt construction work on the runway site.

Israel complained that the building site did not comply with earlier agreements that required in part that the airport terminal be located on territory remaining under Israeli security control.

"The airport will be in Palestinian territory and the administration will be Palestinian," Mr. Shaath said.

But he added that part of the facility would be in a "yellow zone" where Israel retains security oversight.

The Palestinians had begun building a runway which would have brought planes into the Gaza Strip directly over the Egyptian border and initial plans would have placed the terminal in terri-

torily fully controlled by the Palestinian Authority.

Israeli officials had also wanted the runway to be rotated slightly to ensure that flight routes will not be directly over the Egyptian border, although Mr. Shaath said construction was continuing with no change to the runway location.

Mr. Shaath said he would meet again with Gen. Shohor on Feb. 25 to continue talks on the airport as well as on Palestinian plans to build a harbour in Gaza City.

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Iran 'Jerusalem Day' rallies blast Mideast peace

TEHRAN (R) — Large crowds chanting "Death to Israel" and "Death to America" marched in Tehran to celebrate Jerusalem Day on Friday and heard President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani condemn Middle East peace accords as a sell-out.

Men and women marched to Tehran University carrying placards reading "Death to compromisers" and pictures of Iran's late leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his successor Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The demonstration was part of rallies held across Iran

to mark "Al Quds (Jerusalem) Day," the last Friday of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan dedicated to protests against the Jewish state by Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979.

Mr. Rafsanjani, addressing the crowd, condemned the accords for not solving the central problem of Palestinian refugees.

"How can it be possible to disregard the fate of four million Palestinian refugees... these people's existence is full of rage," Mr. Rafsanjani said in a prayer sermon broadcast on Tehran Radio.

"It is impossible to solve the Palestinian problem in this way... the Islamic movement will certainly become stronger... in the past it did not have a base like the Islamic Republic... a country of 60 million, with all these resources," he said.

"Arab and Islamic nations will certainly not be convinced. The weak Arab governments will not succeed in convincing their public, and world Muslims, including Iran will surely not give up their Islamic rights," Mr. Rafsanjani told the crowd which responded by chanting

Allahu Akbar.

"America is really wrong... They are killing people in the name of peace and deepening the crisis. If they have goodwill they should solve the refugee problem... so that Jews, Christians and Muslims... can live together in Palestine," Mr. Rafsanjani said.

"It is bitter to see that Arabs believe that this peace... will end wars. It is very simplistic to believe that Israel would agree in these conditions to an independent Palestinian state being set up next to it," he added.

"This is a sad period of history. This lack of sensibility and the fact that (Arabs and Muslims) don't feel the danger (of Israel) is very bad. Our voice, as a state is almost alone, and we have a lot to do," Mr. Rafsanjani said in a rare recognition of Iran's isolation in the face of the peace process.

A resolution read at the rally blasted the United States as "the century's mother of corruption" and called for "continued struggle until the annihilation of the Zionist regime (Israel)," Tehran Radio said.

Turkey 'will not stand idly by' over Aegean islands

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey talked tough Friday in its dispute with Greece over a small island in the Aegean Sea, saying it will "not stand idly by" if Athens presses its claim of sovereignty over the outcrop.

In a statement, the Turkish foreign ministry said the charge d'affaires at the Greek embassy in Ankara had been told that Athens must "avert all gestures liable to strike a blow to Turkey at the international level."

"Turkey will not rest idly by if Greece takes a position that prejudices Turkish interests in the Aegean or in international forums," the Greek diplomat was told by Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Onur Oymen.

Turkey and Greece nearly came to blows over the island — which Greece calls Imia and Turkey calls the Kardak — at the end of January after Turkish journalists planted their nation's flag on it.

Greece then landed on the island to reassert Athens' claim, then left after Washington — fearing a row between the two NATO allies not far from the war-torn former Yugoslavia — intervened.

The Turkish foreign minis-

try added Friday that Athens, in response to a Jan. 29 message from Ankara, had reaffirmed its "allegations" about the island and rejected a Turkish proposal for talks to resolve the dispute.

Athen's reply "contained no legal proof on the international level to support Greece's claim" to the island, which is situated close to the Turkish coastline, it added.

In Brussels, Turkish Foreign Minister Deniz Baykal, who met the European Commissioner for Foreign Affairs Hans van den Broek on Friday, said Ankara still wanted to settle the dispute peacefully.

He reaffirmed his government's intention not to resort to armed conflict to resolve the dispute, which he argued had not been provoked by Turkey, a spokesman for Mr. Van den Broek said.

The European Commission took advantage of the meeting to express its "full solidarity with Greece" in the affair, while adding that the two sides should settle their differences peacefully, the spokesman said.

If need be, they should take the matter to the International Court of Justice in the Hague, he added.

Elections for engineers president, council postponed

By Sa'eda Kilani

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Elections for the president and council of Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA) were postponed until today because of a low turnout of voters yesterday: Only 5,600 out of 12,690, eligible voters turned out.

According to the law, half of the registered voters — in this case 6346 — should appear on election day. Elections will be held today and will be considered final even if quorum was not achieved.

The general trend shows that JEA President Leith Shbeilat, currently held on less majestic charges, is likely to regain his seat. The green and white blocs, the two main and traditional forces within the association, representing the Islamists and nationalists respectively, said they did not field candidates for the presidency in order to leave it open for Mr. Shbeilat. Three independents are running against Mr. Shbeilat.

Relatives and friends of Mr. Shbeilat held banners and raised slogans on Friday urging engineers to elect the detained president. Lower House of Parliament deputy, Toufan Faisal (Animan),

turned up at the professional associations complex in Shmeisani, to campaign for Mr. Shbeilat.

Photos of Mr. Shbeilat and slogans supporting his bid filled the complex's halls. One of the banners, signed by Mr. Shbeilat, accused the government of launching attacks against the professional associations so as to please "Zionism and foreign capital."

If he regains his seat, Mr. Shbeilat, known for his strong opposition to the peace process and normalisation of relations with Israel, will become president of the association for the fourth time.

Mr. Shbeilat is now being tried at the State Security Court for slandering Their Majesties the King and the Queen and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in addition to other charges. If convicted he can face up to three years in prison.

Mr. Shbeilat's defence team filed several requests to release their client on bail but all were turned down.

deh. There are mixed signals over the candidacy of Mr. Hawamdeh and whether he is being supported by the white bloc, the Islamists trend at the association, or not.

Heated competition is however on for the vice-presidency seat. Although eleven candidates nominated themselves for the post last week, the list now includes two candidates only. They are Islamist Husni Abu Ghaidia, a former JEA President, and Abdul Rahman Bitar, the candidate of the green bloc, or the nationalists at the association.

Both candidates enjoy wide popularity, but balance is tilted towards Mr. Abu Ghaidia who lost his bid for Mr. Shbeilat two years ago.

If Mr. Shbeilat were to be convicted the presidency would automatically go to the JEA vice-president.

The final results are expected to be announced late today. All ballot boxes have been sealed with wax. Head of the electoral committee Mansour Shammout told the Jordan Times that the turnout, though poor, was better than last year. He confirmed that there had not been any problems or harassment from any party all day Tuesday.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Syria, Iraq warn Western firms over dams

DAMASCUS (AP) — Syria and Iraq set aside their long-time rivalry Thursday to warn European companies building dams for Turkey on the Euphrates River that they will be banned in the two countries if they continue with the projects. Syria and Iraq depend on the Euphrates, which rises in Turkey, for much of their water supply and fear that the flow will be seriously reduced because of Ankara's ambitious programme for a network of hydroelectric dams and irrigation projects. Abdul Sattar Saliman, undersecretary at Iraq's irrigation ministry, told reporters of the warning after a meeting of the Syrian-Iraqi technical committee that sought to find a common strategy in the water dispute with Turkey. "We agreed to send letters to these companies, warning them that they will be deprived of any opportunity to work in Syria and Iraq," he told reporters. He did not name the companies. But earlier this week he said they were based in France, Britain, Italy, Austria and Belgium.

Eritrea: No agreement on dispute with Yemen

NAIROBI (AFP) — Eritrea and Yemen have still not agreed on the definition of their dispute over Red Sea islands, an Eritrean commission said on Friday after meetings with French mediators. In a statement made available to AFP in Nairobi, the National Commission for Zuqar-Hanish Archipelago Dispute and Maritime Boundary Delineation said Yemen was illegally occupying the island of Zuqar but that Sanaa wanted to limit discussions to claims over the island of Greater Hanish. The statement followed a visit to Asmara on Wednesday and Thursday by French mediators Francis Guttman and Jean-Marie Mommil, who met with President Issaias Afewerki and other officials.

Turkish president consulted in government talks

ANAKARA (R) — Turkish President Suleyman Demirel met Prime Minister-Designate Mesut Yilmaz Friday for talks on forging a government that could give Islamists their biggest share of power in modern Turkey's history. Mr. Yilmaz, a conservative, left the presidential palace through a side door after the hour-long meeting, giving waiting journalists the slip. Mr. Yilmaz's Motherland Party and the Islamist Welfare Party have agreed to a news blackout until the end of negotiations between them on setting up a new government after inconclusive general elections last December. Mr. Yilmaz is to meet Welfare leader Necmettin Erbakan on Saturday after saying they had made progress towards forming a government.

Swedish police net gang smuggling Iraqis

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Swedish police have detained eight members of a gang which smuggled from 600 to 1,000 Iraqis into Sweden last year, police here said. The eight suspects are all Iraqis but Swedish law does not permit them to be identified, said Inspector Soeren Brandin, the spokesman for police headquarters. He said detectives had been alerted by the staff of a foreign embassy to the traffic around last Christmas. A search of the home near Stockholm of the suspected ringleader had yielded a stock of passports, papers and material for forging official documents, Mr. Brandin said.

Founder of Israeli Arab movement dies

UM AL FAHM, Israel (AFP) — The founder of the first Arab nationalist movement in Israel, Mohammad Kiwan, has been killed to a tractor accident, his family said Friday. Mr. Kiwan, 56, who founded Al Ard (The Land) movement in the early 1960s, died when his tractor reversed over him as he worked in an olive grove near his home in Um Al Fahm, north of Tel Aviv. Israel banned his organisation from taking part in general elections, judging it subversive, and Mr. Kiwan was placed under house arrest many times. He had scaled down his political activities in recent years, though he kept in touch with Jewish left-wing radicals.

Gunmen kill 2 Egyptian police

CAIRO (AFP) — Muslim militants shot and killed two police officers and wounded three civilians Friday outside a shop in Egypt's troubled southern region of Assiut, police said. The gunmen fled the scene after the shooting in Sahel Selim, 400 kilometres south of Cairo. The incident brought the number of deaths in nearly four years of anti-government violence to 960.

